





RB192153



*Presented to the*  
LIBRARY *of the*  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
*by*  
Professor  
Ralph G. Stanton

To my dear Florence  
with the Author's (her  
Father's) love and best  
wishes.

Wm 1886.



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2019 with funding from  
University of Toronto



THE  
SCRIPTURES DEFENDED;  
BEING  
A REPLY TO BISHOP COLENSO'S BOOK,  
ON THE  
PENTATEUCH AND THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

---

THE LAW OF THE LORD IS PERFECT,  
CONVERTING THE SOUL :  
THE TESTIMONY OF THE LORD IS SURE,  
MAKING WISE THE SIMPLE.  
*Psalm xix., 7.*

FOR VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, TILL HEAVEN AND EARTH PASS, ONE JOT  
OR ONE TITTLE SHALL IN NO WISE PASS FROM THE LAW, TILL ALL BE FUL-  
FILLED.—*Matt. v., 18.*

---

BY J. M. HIRSCHFELDER,  
LECTURER ON ORIENTAL LITERATURE, UNIV. COLL., TORONTO,  
*Author of an Essay on the Spirit and Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry.*

---

TORONTO :  
HENRY ROWSELL, KING STREET.

---

1863.



---

ROWSELL & ELLIS, PRINTERS, KING STREET, TORONTO.

---



## PREFACE.

---

When I published the first of the following series of articles I had no intention of undertaking the responsible and laborious task of writing a full reply to Bishop Colenso's book on the Pentateuch, my object was merely to allay the excitement which the announcement of such a heretical work from the pen of so eminent a prelate was then creating. From extracts which had appeared in some of the leading journals, it was impossible not to perceive that a fatal blow was aimed at the Scriptures, and consequently at Christianity; and the instrument being wielded by an eminent mathematician and dignitary of the church of England, it is not to be wondered at that the minds of the lovers of the Bible should at first have been somewhat disturbed. Indeed, for a time, the chief topic of conversation was Bishop Colenso's new book: and thinking that, under the circumstances, a few general remarks bearing upon the subject might not be unwelcome to the public, I determined, as the book had not yet reached this country, merely to throw out a few observations, showing how strange it was that the almost numberless commentators and critics, both ancient and modern, should not have perceived those discrepancies, if such had existed, which the Bishop of Natal professed to have discovered in the Pentateuch and Book of Joshua.

When the book at last came to hand, and I saw the subjects which were taken up, and the manner in which they were treated, and being likewise informed that the book met with an unprecedented sale here, I felt it my duty to refute it with as little delay as possible. There appeared to me great danger that the conscientiousness which the Bishop seemingly evinces in having undertaken this responsible work—showing no concern whether the step he had taken would affect him in a pecuniary point of view or not—and the



positiveness and assurance which he displays in setting forth his views as being unmistakeably correct, as well as the plausible manner in which his arguments are laid down, might at least tend to impress many, who were not capable of judging of the correctness of his views, with erroneous ideas, if not convert them altogether to his novel doctrine. As impressions when once formed are not easily eradicated; and remembering that Solomon said “a word spoken in due season, how good is it”—Prov. xv., 23—it occurred to me that the readiest and surest mode of preventing any wrong notions being adopted would be to publish a number of short articles, as too long a time would necessarily have to elapse before a complete answer to the book could be brought out, and as the former mode would insure likewise greater publicity; I had no difficulty in carrying out this plan, as the columns of the *Leader* were kindly placed at my service, that journal rendering thereby a service to the cause of religion which, I am sure, the public will know how to appreciate.

Being repeatedly requested to publish the articles which appeared in the *Leader* in a book, I have determined to comply with the wishes so frequently expressed, and at the same time seized the opportunity not only to add important arguments, but also numerous notes, which I hope the reader will find both useful and interesting.

Having now briefly stated the reasons which induced me to undertake so responsible a task, I shall in the next place offer a few cursory remarks on Bishop Colenso's book itself.

In writing my replies, it was of course necessary to examine carefully all the statements and arguments which Dr. Colenso brought forward, and whilst thus engaged the question would frequently present itself to my mind—had the Bishop really any conception of the magnitude and seriousness of the work which he has taken upon himself to perform? I must confess I could hardly bring myself to believe that any one who called himself a Christian could possibly have given expression to such views as are set forth in the



book, which simply reduce the writings of Moses to the level of the extravagant tales of the impostor Mohammed. It is vain for Dr. Colenso to conceal his real design by such language as the following: "And the truth in the present instance, as I have said, is this, that the Pentateuch, as a whole, was not written by Moses, and that, with respect to some, at least the chief portions of the story, it cannot be regarded as historically true. It does not, therefore, cease to 'contain the true word of God,' with all things necessary for salvation,' to be 'profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness' "—page 55. The covering is artfully woven, but the texture is too fine and transparent to answer the purpose. We are to believe that the accounts of the creation, the fall of man, and the deluge, are nothing but fictions; that the whole narrative of the Exodus, including the giving of the Mosaic law, is only an idle tale; but that, notwithstanding all this, the Pentateuch still contains "all things necessary for salvation." Truly, the man that can persuade himself to adopt such a creed must possess extraordinary powers of imagination. I need hardly say that it is altogether against the plain teaching of Scripture, but it is even opposed to common sense. Dr. Colenso does not point out to his readers the portions of the Pentateuch which, according to his opinion, "contain the true word of God," he merely asserts that there are some; but I would ask Dr. Colenso by what process was he enabled to discover the genuine from the spurious portions? I maintain, that if the Pentateuch contains "absolute, palpable self-contradictions," as the Bishop will have it, then it is beyond the power of the finite understanding of man to find out which is fictitious and which is true. We have here no alternative; we must either receive the whole Pentateuch as the inspired Word of God, and as *absolutely true*, or reject the whole as *absolutely false*. If we deny the truth of the principal events recorded in the Mosaic writings, what proof have we that there ever existed such scriptural personages as are mentioned there? It will, perhaps, be said that



the traditions of nations in all parts of the globe testify to their having existed ; but do they not also speak of the principal events which are immediately connected with their names ? What tradition makes mention of Noah and is silent as to the deluge ? Among what people is the name of Moses known, without its being known as that of the great leader and law-giver of Israel ?

— Bishop Colenso, however, evidently foresees what the adoption of his novel views regarding the Pentateuch must necessarily lead to, and that is nothing less than *the rejection of the whole Bible as an inspired book*, and he seems to prepare the way for such a result. It is impossible not to perceive the drift of such language as the following :—“ Our belief in the living God remains as sure as ever, though not the Pentateuch only, but the whole Bible were removed.”

And a little farther on he says, “ But there will be others of a different stamp—meek, lowly, loving souls, who are walking daily with God, and have been taught to consider a belief in the historical veracity of the story of the Exodus as an essential part of their religion, upon which, indeed, as it seems to them, the whole fabric of their faith and hope in God is based. It is not really so : the light of God’s love did not shine less truly on pious minds when ‘ Enoch walked with God ’ of old, though there was then no Bible in existence, than it does now. And it is perhaps God’s will that we shall be taught in this our day, among other precious lessons, not to build up our faith upon a book, though it be the Bible itself, but to realise more truly the blessedness of knowing that He himself, the living God, our Father and Friend, is nearer and closer to us than any book can be”—pp. 53, 54. Or, in plain language, that we may have a religion without a Bible, and consequently without a Saviour, and without any divine laws for our guidance, but which may, notwithstanding, be acceptable unto God. Such, reader, are the doctrines promulgated by Bishop Colenso, and well may he exclaim, “ What the end may be, God only, the God of truth, can foresee”—p. 46.

There are many instances on record in biographies of scientific men, of many years, if not of whole life-times, being spent in the investigation of subjects before they were finally ushered into the world; and this was particularly the case in the promulgation of some new hypothesis which conflicted with long established systems, or commonly received opinions. If such, then, has been the practice in dealing with secular matters, how infinitely more careful ought he to be who deals with subjects appertaining to the sacred Scriptures and religion. The ancient Rabbies had a wholesome maxim, warning the wise men to be careful of their words, lest the disciples who came after them might discover the place of bitter waters, (*i. e.* false doctrine,) and drink of it, and die, and the name of heaven be thereby profaned. It might reasonably be expected that the novel views with which Dr. Colenso has startled the religious world, are at least the result of many years of careful and serious study of the subject, seeing how deeply they affect the Bible and the Christian religion. Such, however, is not the case, for he distinctly tells us that "in January, 1861," he had "not even begun to enter on these enquiries," though he "fully intended to do so," on his "return to Natal"—p. 12. The opinions which Dr. Colenso has adopted, therefore, do not even come to us with the recommendation of having been deliberately and carefully considered, but are seemingly only of a mushroom growth; and the attentive reader will, no doubt, pause here and ask himself whether it is likely that if such "discrepancies and palpable self-contradictions" existed in the Pentateuch they could possibly have escaped the notice of the thousands of critics and commentators, many of whom spent their whole lives in the study of Scripture, and other branches of learning immediately connected with it.

Again, it might reasonably be expected that in such a serious and momentous undertaking, Dr. Colenso would have first sought the opinions of some able men, before he "launched" his "bark upon the flood," which might unexpectedly carry him into a tempest-tossed ocean of doubt and



disbelief. Such a course would have only been consistent with the usual practice adopted before venturing upon an important enterprise. But the Bishop preferred to trust altogether to his own understanding and judgment; he had indeed—as he tells us at the beginning of the preface—written a letter “to a Professor of divinity in one of our English universities;” but even this letter was not forwarded, though he apparently felt that he stood in need of advice and assistance. For the benefit of those of my readers who may not have read Bishop Colenso’s book, I shall give a brief extract from the letter above alluded to.

“My remembrance of the friendly intercourse which I have enjoyed with you in former days would be enough to assure me that you would excuse my troubling you on the present occasion, were I not also certain that, on far higher grounds, you will gladly lend what aid you can to a brother in distress, and in very great need of advice and assistance, such as few are better able to give than yourself. You will easily understand that, in this distant colony, I am far removed from the possibility of converse with those who would be capable of appreciating my difficulties, and helping me with friendly sympathy and counsel. I have many friends in England, but there are few to whom I would look more readily than to yourself, for the help which I need, from regard both to your public position and private character; and you have given evidence, moreover, in your published works, of that extensive reading and sound judgment, the aid of which I specially require under my present circumstances”—pp. 3, 4. It is much to be regretted that that letter was never forwarded.

I must, however, give Bishop Colenso credit for not having followed the advice of a friend of his who expressed a fear, that he “might give offence by stating too plainly at the outset the end which” he “had in view,” but “suggested that” he “might do more wisely to conceal, as it were,” his “purpose for a time, and lead the reader gradually on, till he would arrive of himself, almost unawares, at the same conclusion as” his “own.” (See page 18.)

I am glad that Dr. Colenso did not listen to this treacherous and contemptible advice, and it is but due to him to record here his reason; he observes, “however judicious for a merely rhetorical purpose such a course might have been, I would not allow myself to adopt it here, in a matter where such very important consequences are involved”—p. 18.

Having been under the necessity of drawing attention, in the following pages, to several mis-translations in the English version, which may have a tendency both to weaken the confidence which is universally reposed in it, and to detract from its acknowledged excellence; I think it but right to make here a few remarks upon the general merits of the authorised version. The reader will, I am sure, not think it presumptuous in my venturing to express an opinion on this subject, when I tell him that I began the study of Hebrew at an early age, and have had the experience of twenty years’ teaching.

The labour of executing a new version of the Scriptures, was entrusted by King James I. to fifty-four persons, distinguished both for piety and learning, but by the time they commenced the work, seven of the number had either died, or had become enfeebled by old age, and only forty-seven entered upon the task. No labour was spared, and every possible precaution was taken by the translators to ensure a faithful translation, and certainly their endeavours were crowned with signal success, for it is admitted by the most competent judges that the English version ranks amongst the very best translations that have ever been made of the Scriptures. I entirely agree with Prof. Bush, who remarks, in speaking of the authorised version, that “in point of fidelity, perspicuity, simplicity, energy, and dignity, it, doubtless, stands unrivalled.” Even those writers, who at times have called for a new translation, do not pretend to deny the excellency of our received version. But whilst I gladly bear my humble testimony to the great merits of the English version, it would be doing an injustice to the Scriptures, were I not also to state that, notwithstanding its



admitted excellence, it cannot, by any means, be regarded as immaculate; that, however much we may love and admire it, as one of the greatest achievements in translating that has ever been accomplished, we must still admit that it contains many mis-translations, and that the translators have sometimes misunderstood the Hebrew idioms, and at other times failed to enter into the spirit of the sacred language. The reader will probably ask, and was this the fault of the translators? I answer, decidedly not! In my opinion, they performed their work as well as it could be expected, considering that they did not possess in those days so extensive a biblical apparatus as we do at the present time. It must be borne in mind that the science of philology is far more advanced now than it was then. The aids to biblical criticism have, since that time, been amazingly increased in the collation of ancient manuscripts and versions, and in the publication of polyglots, concordances, lexicons, and critical grammars. Eastern travellers, too, have contributed not a little to make us better acquainted with the geography, natural history, manners, and customs of the east. The increased desire within the last half century for the study of eastern languages, and particularly those of the Shemitic family, has been productive of a much closer enquiry into the affinities of the oriental dialects than had previously existed, and, in consequence, numerous difficulties and doubts as to the precise meaning of many words in the Old Testament have been removed, or cleared up. Hence the necessity of a new translation, or a revision of the English version, has from time to time been strongly urged, and a member of the British House of Commons, not many years ago, brought the subject before parliament, by giving notice that he would move “an address to her Majesty, praying that her Majesty will be graciously pleased to appoint a commission, to enquire into the state of the authorised version of the Bible, and to prepare a plan for the further revision of that translation.” With respect to this subject, I here re-print the opinion which I have already expressed in the introduction to my “Biblical Expositor,” viz. :

“This, I may observe, is no whim of the learned of the present age, but has been already advocated by several highly esteemed writers of the last century. Thus, Bishop Lowth, in the Preliminary Dissertation to his commentary on Isaiah, in speaking of Archbishop Secker’s marginal notes on the Bible, says, ‘These valuable remains of that great and good man will be of infinite service, whenever that necessary work, a new translation, or a revision of the present translation of the Holy Scriptures, for the use of our church, shall be undertaken.’ In another place he remarks, ‘And as to the turn and modification of the sentences, the translator, in this particular province of translation, is, I think, as much confined to the author’s manner as to his words: so that too great liberties taken in varying either the expression or the composition, in order to give a new air to the whole, will be apt to have a very bad effect. For these reasons, whenever it shall be thought proper to set forth the Holy Scriptures for the public use of our church, to better advantage, than as they appear in the present English translation, the expediency of which grows every day more and more evident, a revision or correction of that translation may perhaps be more advisable, than to attempt an entirely new one. For as to the style and language, it admits but of little improvement; but, in respect of the sense and the accuracy of interpretation, the improvements of which it is capable are great and numberless.’

“Some years earlier Stackhouse, in the Preparatory Discourse to his History of the Bible, expressed himself still more strongly on this subject. This writer, after having briefly alluded to the origin of the common version, goes on to say, ‘This is the translation which we read in our Churches at this Day; only the old version of the Psalms (as ’tis called), which was made by Bishop Tunstal, is still retained in our publick Liturgy. And tho’ it cannot be denied, that this translation of ours, especially taking along with it the *marginal Notes*, (which are sometimes of great service to explain difficult passages), is one of the most perfect of its kind; yet I hope it will be no detraction to its Merit, nor any Diminution of the Authority of the Holy Scriptures to wish, that such as are invested with a proper *Authority*, would appoint a *regular Revisal* of it, that, where it is faulty, it may be amended; where difficult, rendered more plain; where obscure,



cleared up; and in all Points, made as obvious as possible to the apprehension of the *meanest Reader*.' A little further on, after having given some rules for interpreting Scripture, he says, 'These and many more *Rules* of Interpretation are not unknown to the Learned: But the common People, who are no less concern'd to know the Will of God, are entirely ignorant in this Respect; and therefore, if a Version be defective in several of these Particulars (as those, who have examin'd ours with Observation, are forced to acknowledge that it is), if, when the *Original* is *figurative*, our *Translators*, in several Places, have expressed it in a Way not accommodated to our present Notions of Things, when they might have done it with the same Propriety: If, when there is an Ambiguity in any Word or Phrase, they have frequently taken the *wrong* Sense, and for Want of attending to the *Transposition* or *Context*, have run into some *Errors*, and many Times unintelligible *Diction*: If they have committed palpable Mistakes in the names of *Cities* and *Countries*, of *Weights* and *Measures*, of *Fruits* and *Trees*, and several of the *Animals* which the Scripture mentions; and lastly, if, by misapprehending the Nature of a *Proposition*, whether it be *Negative* or *Affirmative*, or the Tense of a Verb, whether it be *past* or *future*, they have fallen upon a Sense, in a Manner, quite *opposite* to the Original; and by not attending to some *oriental* Customs, or Forms of Speech, have represented Matters in a Dress quite foreign to the *English Dialect*: If in these, and such like instances, I say, our Translators have made such Mistakes, the People, who know not how to rectify them, must be misled.'

"The force of these remarks can hardly be denied. The Bible is designed for the illiterate as well as the literate; it is the way-mark that points to an eternal land of bliss for the unlearned as well as the learned; and the former, as well as the latter, are therefore concerned in rightly understanding its infallible directions. It is true that no version, however well executed, will altogether obviate the necessity of a commentary, as its province is merely to give a literal translation of the original, and not the sense, when the language is figurative, or otherwise not quite clear. But if a version were to attach the proper meaning to words, and not one which renders the sense of the phrase obscure, —if it were to maintain a uniformity in the mode of rendering,

and not attach one signification to a word in one place, and an entirely different one in another,—if this, and some other particulars, were strictly attended to, many passages in the English version, now altogether unintelligible to the common reader, would become perfectly clear. Yet, strongly impressed as we are with these considerations, the question, nevertheless, forces itself irresistibly upon us, whether a revision of the common version would yield such satisfactory results as to warrant such a step. The task is exceedingly difficult, and the degree of success attending such an undertaking must entirely depend upon the mode pursued in its prosecution, and upon the competency, strict impartiality, and unquestionable piety of those intrusted with the work; and even though Great Britain undoubtedly might furnish many learned men possessing all the requirements necessary for this important work, still they would be no more infallible than their predecessors. They might indeed correct many of the existing mistakes, and render more intelligible many passages now obscure; but is there no danger that in their zeal to afford a version more suitable to the common reader, they might not also run into extremes, and instead of giving the plain, literal, and grammatical sense of the original, give rather a paraphrase of expressions and sentences, which, however admissible in translations merely designed for the private use of the reader, is certainly not justifiable in a translation executed for the public service of the Church? A version intended to be used in public worship should, as closely as circumstances will admit, convey the precise force of the words as they were dictated by the Holy Spirit and written down by the inspired writers, whether the language be figurative, or otherwise not quite clear. In all cases a free rendering must be carefully avoided; for, as Bishop Lowth has well remarked, “want of fidelity admits of no excuse, and is entitled to no indulgence.”\* I cannot, therefore, agree with the learned Stackhouse, who, in enumerating the defects of our present translation, includes the literal rendering of figurative expressions as one of the faults which ought to be remedied. He adduces, as an example, Isaiah xiii., 9, 10—“Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate, and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars

---

\* Preliminary Dissertation to his Commentary on Isaiah.



of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his coming forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." On this he remarks: "But we are not to take these, and the like Words *literally*, because they were never accomplished in the full Extent of their natural Signification; and therefore to express the Meaning of the Prophet, *it seems sufficient to say, That fearful calamities should come upon the King of Babylon; that his people should fall into the Hand of their Enemies; and that all Orders and Degrees of Men* (here represented by *Sun, Moon, and Stars*) should be utterly dissolved: For this is all that the *Eastern Nations* (as well as the *Greeks, Latins, and Arabians*) even to this day do mean by these pompous Expressions."\* Were such a mode of translation to be adopted, the result would be that we should read in our divine service the individual comments of the translators wherever an explanation was required, instead of the Word of God itself; we should have, not *a version* of the sacred Scriptures, but *a paraphrase*, which after all might be replete with wrong interpretations.

"On the whole, fully impressed as I am with the extreme difficulty, nay, I may say the utter impossibility, of producing a translation of the Bible which should be regarded as altogether free from objection,—one which would give general satisfaction to all classes of English readers, particularly when we consider the great diversity of opinions that exist on religious matters, the correctness of which entirely depends upon the rendering of those passages of Scripture upon which they are based, and when we further consider the danger of too great a freedom being exercised in their revisal by those entrusted with the work,—I must confess that I greatly doubt the propriety of interfering with the present time-hallowed version. Far better would it be that its defects be supplied from time to time by commentaries, or in any other suitable way, than by disturbing a version so affectionately cherished by millions."

There have not been wanting at all times reckless persons who were ever ready to cast imputations upon Holy Writ, as containing many inconsistencies—or as some have more boldly

---

\* Preparatory Discourse to his History of the Bible, Article "The Defects of our Present Translation." See also Essay for a new Translation.

styled them, direct contradictions ; and many of them—like a drowning man, who will eagerly grasp at a straw, as the last resource to save his life—have seized upon every little mistranslation in our version in their attacks upon the Bible. These attacks were frequently made by persons who either knew nothing of the Hebrew language at all, or who had only a superficial knowledge of it, and as their assertions could therefore not be based upon a rigid and critical examination of the subject, there was little difficulty in refuting them ; still there was always danger of some, who were not capable of judging for themselves, being misled by them.

That the reader may better understand the foregoing remarks, I shall adduce here a few of the passages which have been held up by some as containing inconsistencies, but which are in reality nothing more than mistranslations. In Gen. i., 2, it is said, “And the earth was without form and void.” Here it has been objected to, and I must say, very justly, “that it is impossible to conceive how any thing material can possibly subsist ‘*without form.*’ ”

Matter, as wise logicians say,  
Cannot without form subsist ;  
And form, say I, as well as they,  
Must fail, if matter brings no grist.

—*Swift.*

The difficulty, however, is entirely removed when we appeal to the original Hebrew, where we read, “And the earth was *thohu vavohu*, lit., desolateness and emptiness—*i. e.*, desolate and empty, or without covering of any kind ; abstract nouns being often employed in Hebrew instead of adjectives. The meaning of the passage now becomes perfectly obvious. The earth, after its creation, was *desolate and empty*, inasmuch as no organised beings existed upon it—they had not yet been summoned into being, or made by the Creator. The English version has been followed by the French, “*sans forme et vide*,” and these alone have given “*without form and void*,” As for instance, the Targum of Onkelos, (Chaldee version), gives “*tsadya verekonya*,”



*i. e., desolate and empty*—the Syriac “tuh vevuh,” *i. e., desolate and empty*—the Vulgate, “inanis et vacua,” *i. e., empty and void*—the German, “wüste und leer,” *desolate and empty*—the Italian, “una cosa deserta e vacua, *i. e., a thing uninhabited and empty*—the Spanish, “desnuda y vacia,” *i. e., bare and empty*. In Gen. iii., 7, we read, “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.” The term “sewed” in the above passage is highly objectionable, as it would imply that the implements for sewing were known in Paradise; and has frequently been held up as an inconsistency by the opponents of Scripture. The Hebrew verb (taphar) *to sew*, signifies also *to adjust*—to plait—and should have been rendered here, “and they adjusted fig-leaves together.” So, again, Job xvi., 15, “I have” (English version) “sewed sackcloth upon my skin.” This is impossible; it should have been translated, “I have *adjusted* sackcloth upon my skin.” The word “apron” is also too definite a term, *girdle* would have been a better rendering of the Hebrew word *chagorah*. In the following verse we have the not very intelligible expression, “And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden,” but which would have been better rendered, “And they heard the voice of the Lord God resounding in the garden.” The Hebrew verb (halach,) *to walk*, when used in connexion with (kol) *voice*, sometimes assumes the signification *to sound—to resound*. It is used again in this sense in *Exod.* xix., 19, “And when (kol) the voice of the trumpet (holech) was sounding long,” where the translators have rendered the verb correctly by “sounding.”

Again, *Deut.* xxv., 9, we read, “Then shall his brother’s wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto the man that will not build up his brother’s house.”

The rite alluded to in this passage is still observed by the

Israelites, though the occasions on which recourse is had to it, are indeed very rare.

The translation, “and spit in his face,” has very justly given much offence to the Jews, as it represents them practising a custom which would hardly be countenanced, even among savages. Besides, it has been urged by the opponents of the Bible, “that God in his greatness, could never have instituted a rite so degrading and repulsive.” I am, however, happy to have an opportunity to testify that such a custom is never practiced, and still more so in being able to shew that it is not at all commanded in Scripture, which simply requires the brother’s wife to spit out “*bephanav*” *before him, or in his presence*. In the Hebrew, the word *presence* can only be expressed by (*pane*h), *i. e.*, *face*, hence, with the preposition (*be*) *in*, and the pronominal suffix (*av*) *his*, we have the word (*bephanav*,) which is, therefore, as correctly rendered *in his presence*, or *before him*, as “in his face.” So, for example, *Deut. vii.*, 24, “There shall no man be able to stand *bephanecha*, *i. e.*, “in thy presence,” or, as in the English version, “before thee.” See also *Deut. ix.* 25; *Josh. xxi.* 42. Rabbi Shalom Hakohen, who ought to be well acquainted with the rites of his nation, rendered it in his German translation, “*Speie vor ihm aus*,” *i. e.*, *spit out before him*.

It cannot be denied that a great service would be rendered to the sacred Scriptures, if the defects of the English version would be remedied; it would not only have the effect of disarming, to a great extent, the apponents of Scripture, but would likewise tend to render many passages perfectly clear, which are now almost entirely unintelligible to the ordinary reader. But, however desirable a revision of the authorised version may be, I must repeat, that if ever undertaken—which I suppose will sooner or later be the case—it should be done with the greatest caution, and under no consideration, I trust will an entire new translation ever be attempted, for, I am fully persuaded that the result would prove any thing but satisfactory.



The difficulties in translating, even from one of our modern languages, into another of the same family, must necessarily be very great, inasmuch as every language has its idioms, and every nation its peculiar terms of expression, congenial to its vernacular tongue, which, when divested of their native garb, and attired in a foreign dress, lose, at least, much of their original force and beauty, if they do not become so disfigured as to be no longer recognised.

Yet all that has been stated as regards the ordinary difficulties of translating, falls far short of these encountered in rendering the inspired writing of the Old Testament into a language of a foreign clime. For the Hebrew, as has been aptly observed, "is the language of man in his infancy, ere his reasoning powers have supplanted his feelings: simple in structure, childlike, truthful in expression, the very language of the heart in the household affections, in the ardour of faith, or the abyss of despair; or if dignified, sublime in simple majesty, recalling, in the commonest metaphors, the tent, the desert, the pastoral life of the patriarchal ages; and can we translate such a language as this into that of times and people who have grown grey in philosophy, and the world, and who are artificial or callous in those feelings which the Hebrews expressed with the honest fervour of youth? No, the Hebrew muse, as aforesaid, hangs her harp on the willows, and refuses to sing her native songs in a strange land." \*

In presenting to the public the following replies to Bishop Colenso's objections to the Pentateuch, I must crave the reader's indulgence for all imperfections. I have endeavoured to make my replies as complete as possible, and should any of them have failed to be fully satisfactory, I trust the fault will be considered as lying with me, and not be regarded as admitting of no better defence, for I feel confident that all the objections urged by Dr. Colenso admit of a full and perfect explanation. I have studiously avoided

---

\* Mr. J. Nicholson, in his preface to Ewald's Hebrew Grammar.

to say any thing that might in the least give offence to the Bishop, or in any way be hurtful to his feelings, for, although our opinions, as regards the Pentateuch, are as opposite to each other as are the poles, I still entertain the highest respect for him as an eminent scholar. I may have made use, at times, of strong language, which might probably be deemed somewhat severe, but for which I shall offer no other apology than that I was defending the sacred Scriptures.

Should this volume be favourably received by the public, I shall immediately—if a kind Providence permits—take up Bishop Colenso's second book on the Pentateuch.

J. M. H.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, TORONTO,  
*March the 30th, 1863.*





## ARTICLE I.

---

### GENERAL REMARKS.

---

In the *Leader* of November 20th, there was published an editorial containing some remarks upon a work lately published in England, by no less a personage than the Bishop of Natal. From the extracts there given, it certainly appears to be a curious production, even surpassing the *Essays and Reviews* in presumption and boldness, for the author seems to speak in a tone, as if it were impossible for him to have arrived at false conclusions. "If my conclusions," says the Prelate, "were only speculation, if they were only matters of higher or lower probability, I feel that I should have no right to express them at all in this way, and thus, it may be, disturb painfully the faith of many. But the main result of my examination of the Pentateuch, namely, that the narrative, whatever may be its value and meaning, cannot be regarded as historically true, is not, unless I greatly deceive myself, a doubtful matter of speculation at all, it is a simple question of facts." And he then goes on to say, that the greatest part of the Pentateuch is mere fiction.

How must the reader shudder in perusing this enunciation, to be told that, what he had cherished from his youth, as being the infallible word of God, and given to be his guide and comforter, is nothing



but fiction—offspring of oriental fancy. But whilst the lover of Holy Writ will be justly shocked at such views as those promulgated by the Bishop of Natal, and shortly before him by some other English divines, yet he may rest assured that the Old Testament, which stood the test of several thousand years, will pass through this ordeal as it has done through many already, and shine forth only with increased light.

It is of course impossible, for the present, to enter upon any arguments with the Bishop, until we see upon what grounds he establishes his assertions; but it must strike every person as amazingly strange that these discrepancies should not have been discovered by the celebrated Rabbies who translated the Pentateuch from the Hebrew into Greek, called the Septuagint version. Or by the famous Onkelos, the author of the Chaldee version of the books of Moses, who flourished about fifty years before the Christian era; or by the Rabbies whose names flourish in that celebrated Jewish work called the Talmud, and whose disquisitions clearly indicate that they were men of great research. Or by that celebrated body of Jewish doctors, generally called Masorites, who undertook the laborious task of the revision of the biblical text. All those no doubt were as good Hebrew scholars, and as well versed in Scripture as the Bishop of Natal, and the authors of the *Essays and Reviews*. Or is it likely that the divines from the earliest period of the Christian church, who spent their whole lives in the study of the Bible, as is attested by their voluminous works still extant,

would have overlooked matters so momentous, or that they would have knowingly shut their eyes to false records in the Bible if such had existed? What could have been their object in designedly blinding their understanding? It certainly was not for the love of fame or the prospect of gain. Ephraim, the Syrian divine, was a man of strict conscientious feeling, and is spoken of in great praise as well by the Greeks, Romans, Egyptians and Armenians, as by the Syrians; his commentaries and homilies were held in such great esteem that they were read to the congregations after the reading of the Scriptures. He had a perfect knowledge of the Hebrew, Syriac, Greek and Egyptian languages. Theodore, another learned Syrian divine, who flourished in the fifth century, also wrote a commentary on the whole Bible, which was highly esteemed. The Greek and Latin fathers were all men of great learning, and assiduous in the study of the Holy Scriptures, and some of them also in the study of philosophy; but neither the Greek, Syrian, nor Latin fathers could perceive any thing contradictory or unreasonable in the Pentateuch so as to shake their belief regarding the authenticity or inspiration of the five books of Moses. The close investigation of the Bible led some of them, indeed, to adopt peculiar opinions as to the interpretation and application of certain portions of Scripture, but as to its being the infallible Word of God, in this respect they were of one mind.

And where had the host of eminent modern Jewish commentators their wits, not to have seen



these terrible things in the five books of Moses which Dr. Colenso seems to have discovered? Is it likely that such a man as Moses Maimonides, a learned theologian, a profound philosopher and eminent physician, skilled in Hebrew, Arabic, Chaldee, Greek, and some modern languages—one who spent the greatest part of his life in controversy with the French and German Rabbies, and who for some liberal opinions which he entertained was obliged to flee from Spain, his native country, having been excommunicated, and seek an asylum in Egypt; one who so loved the Study of Scripture that he transcribed the whole Pentateuch from a very ancient manuscript, and who from the acumen and learning which he evinced in illustrating the whole body of the laws of the Hebrews, is called the eagle of Rabbies; I say, is it likely that he would have overlooked all these supposed discrepancies in the Pentateuch? This famous writer, in the course of the study of Scripture, perceived that there existed passages which required explanation, and he wrote the well-known work entitled “More Nevochim,” or “Guide to the Perplexed,” which is partly critical, partly philosophical and partly theological. Its design is to explain the meaning of Scripture; but does he even hint because certain portions of the Old Testament may not be quite clear to the ordinary reader, that on that account it cannot be inspired? On the contrary, of the 13 articles of faith, drawn up by this Rabbi, and which form the summary of the modern Jewish creed, and may be found in any Jewish prayer-book, the 6th, 7th and 8th articles

distinctly declare that all the words of the prophets are true, and that all the law which this day is found in our hands, was delivered by God himself to Moses, and every article commences, "I believe with a perfect faith."

Besides the foregoing writer, we have other shrewd and deep-thinking Rabbies, such as Aben Ezra, an able astronomer and commentator. In the former science he made such happy discoveries that the ablest mathematicians did not scruple to espouse them, and in the latter he showed so much penetration and judgment that even Christians preferred him to most of their interpreters. David Kimchi was both an able grammarian and commentator. Solomon Jarchi is by some styled the prince of commentators. Moses Ben Nachman received, from his great learning, the name of "father of wisdom—the luminary." Isaak Aberbanel, a writer of great intellect and comprehensive mind, and a great many others might be mentioned, nearly of equal fame, all of whom have studied the Scriptures as carefully and critically as Dr. Colenso, but have failed to perceive, with all their acuteness and learning, any of those "variations," "contradictions," "impossibilities," and "absurdities," which he discovered. And what shall we say of such world-renowned interpreters and writers as Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Victorinus Stringelius, Lightfoot, Vitranga, Calmet, Rosenmüller, Buxtorf, Michaelis, Bishop Hall, L'Abbe Migne, Sebastian Schmidt, Poole, Clarke, Priestly, Hävernick, Jameson, Ainsworth, Graves, Hengstenberg, and a host of others, to have passed over silently



such glaring inconsistencies as those which the Bishop of Natal professes to have discovered. There is but one reasonable conclusion that we can arrive at, and that is, that there exist no such inconsistencies in the Pentateuch. Difficulties no doubt often presented themselves to these writers, but then they knew how to surmount them. They investigated the subjects thoroughly which were not quite clear, and rested not until they found the right solution.

The Hebrew language, in which the Old Testament was originally written, has long ago ceased to be spoken, and hence it is often not easy, without much investigation, to arrive at the proper meaning of a word. Most Hebrew words, too, have various significations, and if the right meaning suitable to the context is not chosen, it must necessarily give rise to erroneous conclusions. Let us take for example, Gen. ix., 13 ; "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." From the expression, "I do set," it may be, and indeed it has by some been inferred, that the rainbow was then first set in the clouds ; and yet, when we know that the rainbow is the natural effect of the refraction and reflection of the sun's rays falling on the drops of water, we can hardly bring ourselves to believe that it never was seen during the period which elapsed between the Creation and the Deluge. Nor need we have recourse to such a stretch of imagination, for the Hebrew word *nathan* signifies to give, to put, to set, to appoint, so that if the last meaning had been chosen, and translated, *I do*

*appoint*, the passage would have been perfectly clear. The rainbow was then first appointed as an outward visible sign of the covenant promise made to Noah, though it may have been seen repeatedly before that time. In I. Kings vi., 1, it is said "That Solomon began to build the Temple in the fourth year of his reign over Israel, and in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of Egypt." Josephus, however, gives the time to be "five hundred and ninety-two;" and so does Demetrius, who wrote the history of the Jewish kings, during the reign of Ptolemy Philopator, and which, no doubt, is the correct time. Here, then, we have a difference of 112 years. The favourite mode of getting over this difficulty seems to have been by supposing the number of the Hebrew text to have been corrupted, or not to have originally existed in the text at all. But for what object should the number have been altered or inserted? Dr. Colenso, and the authors of the *Essays and Reviews*, would perhaps not adopt such a mild mode of criticism, but the books of the Kings would, probably, share the same fate with the Pentateuch—no doubt, an easy mode of getting over the difficulty. But let us see whether the 112 years cannot be accounted for in a more legitimate manner. The ancient Jewish Rabbies had certain rules or canons of criticism, which are now contained in the Talmud; these are often of great assistance in the critical reading of Scripture, but having never been translated, and the work being exceedingly scarce, not many have an opportunity of consulting them. One of these rules declares, that



the ancient Jews never counted the time that they were under foreign servitude, for the nation was then considered dead as a nation. Now, let us see how this rule applies here. If we turn to the book of Judges, we find the different periods that the Israelites were given over to foreign nations for their wickedness, as follows:

Judge iii.	8.—To the king of Mesopotamia.	8 years.	
“ “	4.—To the Moabites.....	18	“
“ iv.	3.—To Jabin, king of Canaan ..	20	“
“ vi.	1.—To the Midianites .....	7	“
“ x.	8.—To the Philistines and Amo- rites .....	18	“
“ xiii.	1.—To the Philistines.....	40	“

---

111

Odd months always reckoned with the  
preceding year ..... 1 year:

---

112 years.

Here, then, I think we have the apparent discrepancy of 112 years accounted for, and it is in my opinion a striking proof of the authenticity of Scripture, for no impostor would have ever dreamed of adopting such a mode of calculation.

## ARTICLE II.

---

### GENERAL REMARKS.

---

When some new question in politics or political economy is raised, or some new theory in science is promulgated, the amount of attention and interest which it excites chiefly depends upon the source from which it originated. The position and fame of a statesman or man of science gives weight and frequently attaches importance to a proposition which otherwise would hardly be thought worthy of notice, and yet experience teaches us that even the most eminent politician and the most profound scholar may err, and that it would be exceedingly indiscreet to place implicit confidence in a theory, simply because its author may be a man of rank or celebrity.

Bishop Colenso, in his new book, questions the veracity of the most important narratives recorded in the Pentateuch and the book of Joshua, narratives which have always been held by millions of Jews, Christians, and Mahommedans, not only as infallible truths, but as being written likewise under divine inspiration; narratives, too, which are subjects of history, and still live in the traditions of most nations, and to the truth of which the eternal rocks of Mount Sinai even to this day bear to some extent their testimony, as I shall presently show. Now had a book like that of Dr. Colenso's been



written by a man of less note, or in a more humble station of life, it would have elicited but little attention, indeed few persons would have thought it worth while to peruse it, but coming as it does from the pen of an eminent prelate of the Church of England, the case is quite different ; thousands, both in Europe and America, will read it, and if not promptly met and refuted, the boldness with which the views of the writer are set forth, and the confidence with which he speaks of their being founded upon incontrovertible grounds, may at least shake the faith of many of the readers as to the truth of the Bible, if not lead them to reject it altogether.

From several remarks in the preface and introduction to Bishop Colenso's book, I must, in justice to him say, that I really think that he sincerely and fully believes that the conclusions he has arrived at are perfectly true, and that neither the hope of gain, nor the desire of notoriety, has induced him to take such a serious—aye, awful course. Yet how very differently impressed with the sacredness of the Old Testament Scriptures were those ancient Rabbies who undertook the recension of the Biblical text, to that which the Bishop of Natal evinces in his dealings with that sacred book. The former would not alter so much as a single letter in the text, although in many instances they clearly saw words defectively written—a natural result arising from transcribing manuscripts—caused either by the carelessness of the copyist, or the paleness of the ink—but rather placed their emendations in the margin ; Bishop Colenso, on the other hand, applies with im-

punity the pruning-knife to the Bible, and cuts away, until, it appears to me, there is nothing more left.

Bishop Colenso, in his "introductory remarks," page 55, says:—

"And that truth in the present instance, as I have said, is this, that the Pentateuch, as a whole, was not written by Moses, and that, with respect to some, at least, of the chief portions of the story, it cannot be regarded as historically true. It does not, therefore, cease to contain the 'true word of God,' with 'all things necessary for salvation,' to be 'profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness.' It still remains as an integral portion of that book, with whatever intermixture it may show of human elements—of error, infirmity, passion and ignorance."

I have above given credit to Dr. Colenso for sincerity in believing to be incontrovertibly true all that he has set forth in his book. I am exceedingly sorry that I cannot likewise give him credit for having acted fairly toward the mass of his readers, and toward those religions which are so materially effected by his publication. The author, in promulgating his extraordinary views, should have been more explicit, and told the world at once what he believes to be authentic in the five books of Moses and the book of Joshua, and what he maintains to be mere fiction. He should have published his work entire, or none at all. By the mode he has adopted in selecting a few passages and making a few brief remarks upon them; by alluding to others in the preface and introduction as not historically true, he may, indeed, to use the writer's own words, "disturb painfully the faith of many," and yet not succeed to convert them entirely to his new doctrine, but draw



them into the same whirlpool of uncertainty into which the author himself seems to have plunged, and where he apparently is still tossed about, for he thus exclaims :—

“ What the end may be, God only, the God of truth, can foresee. Meanwhile, believing and trusting in His guidance, I have launched my bark upon the flood, and am carried along by the waters”—p. 46.

But does Dr. Colenso sincerely mean to say, that the account of the creation—of the fall of man—of the deluge—of the exodus, are nothing but fiction, and were not written by Moses, and yet that the Pentateuch contains “ the true word of God with all things necessary for salvation?” What, I would ask, becomes of the whole scheme of redemption, which is summed up by St. Paul in these few words, “ For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” If indeed the fall of Adam as recorded in Gen. III., is merely an idle tale, what do the words of the Apostle Paul mean? Surely, either Dr. Colenso has made this assertion without having given it a careful consideration, or he made it purposely to make the views which he sets forth in his book more palatable to his readers. It is needless to dwell on this topic, every reader of Scripture knows how frequently our Saviour and his Apostles quote from the five Books of Moses. Indeed Dr. Colenso himself foresaw that such objections would probably be raised, and they might seriously influence his readers against his book and the views propounded in it, and therefore quotes a number of passages in his preface, p. 30, such as : “ They have

Moses and the prophets," "If they hear not Moses and the prophets," &c., and explains in page 31 how these difficulties may be overcome. Now, lest the reader may deem his arguments satisfactory, it is necessary to consider them here briefly:

"First," he says, "such words as the above, if understood in their most literal sense, can only be supposed, at all events, to apply to certain parts of the Pentateuch; since most devout Christians will admit that the last chapter of Deuteronomy, which records the death of Moses, could not have been written by his hand."

The last chapter of Deuteronomy contains twelve verses, and records in a concise manner the death of Moses; it can, therefore, not have been written by him.

It was probably added by Joshua, his successor, in order to complete the whole work. In the chapter before the last, however, Moses gives his parting blessing to the tribes, so that only the last chapter could have been added. Now, will any reasonable man say that the Pentateuch is any less the Pentateuch because there were twelve verses added to it at the end? Certainly not. When Christ, therefore, speaks of Moses, he means, not here a chapter and there a chapter, but his whole writing, just as when he speaks of the prophets, he means their entire writings.

But Dr. Colenso was evidently not satisfied with his own explanation, but goes on:

"Secondly, and more generally, it may be said that, in making use of such expressions, 'our Lord' did but accommodate His words to the current popular language of the day."



I perfectly agree with the Bishop in this. The ancient Jews always understood, by the book of Moses, the law of Moses, or the book of the law of Moses, or simply Moses—when not referring to his name—the entire Pentateuch. If, indeed, Christ meant by “Moses” merely certain portions of the Pentateuch which were written by him, as distinct from others written by a Pseudo-Moses, how could the Jews possibly have known to what portions he referred, for it is certain that in this respect they had not the light which the Bishop of Natal professes to possess.

But Bishop Colenso apparently had some doubts as to whether he had succeeded in satisfying the reader on this important point. He therefore adds a third explanation :

“Lastly” he says, “it is perfectly consistent with the most entire and sincere belief in our Lord’s divinity, to hold, as many do, that, when he vouchsafed to become a ‘son of man,’ he took our nature fully, and voluntarily entered into all the conditions of humanity, and, among others, into that which makes our growth in all ordinary knowledge gradual and limited. We are expressly told, in Luke ii., 52, that ‘Jesus increased in wisdom, as well as in stature.’ It is not supposed that, in his human nature, he was acquainted, more than any educated Jew of the age, with the mysteries of all modern sciences ”

This argument really does not merit refutation. Surely our Saviour, who, by his *supernatural knowledge*, was enabled to foretell future events, such as the destruction of Jerusalem, or that one of his disciples would betray him, or that Pêter before the cock crow would deny him thrice, &c., must, also, by

the *same knowledge*, have known that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch. He performed his stupendous miracles by his *almighty power*, and by his *divine wisdom* he knew all things, both past and future ; and to deny this, is in effect denying the divinity of Christ.

But “at what period, then, of his life upon earth,” asks Dr. Colenso, “is it to be supposed that he had granted to him, as the Son of Man, supernaturally, full and accurate information on these points, so that he should be expected to speak about the Pentateuch in other terms than any devout Jew of that day would have employed?”

The answer is given in Luke ii., 40 : “And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom ; and the grace of God was upon Him.” Indeed, the only incident recorded, belonging to the early life of Jesus, is, that at the age of twelve years he went up with his parents to Jerusalem, and there sat among the learned doctors composing the Sanhedrim, “both hearing them, and asking them questions,” affording so wonderful a display of his divine knowledge, that “all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.” Luke ii., 47. Nothing but superhuman knowledge could have enabled Christ, at the age of twelve years, to dispute with such men as those that composed that learned body. For it must be observed that their arguments were not only founded upon the Old Testament, but also upon the *oral law*, and upon metaphysical and ethical disquisitions, most of them being still handed down to us in the Talmud. Not even the high-priest could be a member of that council unless he was endowed with wisdom. Dr.



Colenso has no doubt read some of their arguments ; is he prepared, with all his knowledge, to answer their abstruse questions ? What answer could he or any human being have given to the question proposed by the Sadducees, Mark xii., 19-23, about the seven brethren and the women ? Does our Saviour, in his reply, not exhibit that he was endowed with more than human knowledge ?

I maintain, therefore, that when our Saviour, in whose human nature dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead, speaks of "Moses" and his "writings," he speaks with *divine knowledge* and not in his *human nature* of these writings as being written by the Great Lawgiver, and that to deny that Moses is the author of the Pentateuch is nothing more nor less than "to contradict the words of Christ and to impugn his veracity."

I trust the reader will give this subject the most serious consideration. It is one of the most vital importance, as affecting the veracity of the whole Scriptures. Let him, therefore, weigh it well before he enters the "bark" which the Bishop of Natal has "launched," for the reader may rest assured that before he has drifted down far in "the flood," he would find reason to exclaim with the prelate, "What the end may be, God only, the God of truth, can foresee."

I have, I think, clearly shown that the arguments by which Dr. Colenso tries to get over our Saviour's testimony to the authenticity and inspiration of the Pentateuch, are perfectly futile. I shall in the next place point out that the five books of Moses bear

strong marks as to their being written by one person.

In the first place, I remark, that in the Pentateuch throughout, the pronouns *he* and *she* have but one form, the former was pointed for distinction sake, *hoo*, and the latter *hiv*, the consonants in both are, however, alike. Now, on reference to the Hebrew Bible it will be found, that from Gen. ii., 12, where the feminine form *hiv* first occurs, to Deuteronomy xxx., 13, where I think it occurs for the last time, that form is constantly employed. If we turn next to Joshua xi., 6, where the pronoun *she* first occurs in that book, we find the regular form *hi*, which is always used in the other books of the Old Testament. Now what imposter or imposters would ever have dreamed of imitating Moses by employing this peculiar form of the pronoun which he used. So Moses likewise employs the word *naär*, *a boy*, to express also *a damsel*. See Gen. xxiv., 14, xxxiv., 3, 4, Deut. xxii., 15., 16, &c.

The Masorites drew attention to this peculiarity by giving always the *feminine form* in the margin. In all the other books of the Bible the feminine noun *naärah* is used. Again, in the Pentateuch we have the verb *tsachak*, to laugh, to play ; in all the other books, a softer form is employed, viz., *sachak*. See Gen. xviii., 12, 13, Exod. xxxii., 6. Compare on the other hand Psal. ii., 4, Ecc. iii., 4, Job. xxx., 1, Prov. xxiv., 19, Jer. xv., 17, &c., &c. But the writer of the Pentateuch makes also use of certain words which indicate that he was born and educated in Egypt. Thus in Gen. xli., 2, he employs the word *achoo*, which is an Egyptian word denoting *bulrushes* ;



Isaiah, however, ch. xix., 7, makes use of the Hebrew word *aroth*, and in the Septuagint both words are rendered by *achi*, being the same Egyptian word expressed merely by a different vowel.

These philological peculiarities are strong proofs apart from many others which may be adduced that Moses was the author of the whole Pentateuch, far stronger than those numerical discrepancies which Dr. Colenso adduces against its authenticity, considering how easy it is to convert 100,000 into 1,000,000. He may indeed declare the Exodus to be mere fiction, but the inscriptions on the rocks of Sinai still proclaim,

“ Turned into dry land the sea, the Hebrews flee through the sea.”—Sinai Photographed.

I have thought it best to commence on the outposts before attacking the citadel. In my next communication I shall take up some of Bishop Colenso's objections.

---

### ARTICLE III.

---

#### THE FAMILY OF JUDAH.

---

Bishop Colenso professes to show, “by means of a number of prominent instances, that the books of the Pentateuch contain, in their own account of the story which they profess to relate, such remarkable contradictions, and involve such plain impossibilities, that they cannot be regarded as true narratives of actual, historical, matters of fact”—p. 60. But what I understand him to mean is, that Dr. Colenso has simply met with a number of *apparent* difficulties in the Pentateuch which he did not know how to explain or reconcile, and at once jumped at the conclusion that they are “remarkable contradictions, plain impossibilities,” &c.

The first passage which he notices as containing an inconsistency is Gen. xlvii., 12. “And the sons of Judah, Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah; but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan; and the sons of Pharez, Hezron and Hamul.” This is the manner in which Dr. Colenso has quoted the passage, but I shall immediately show that he has made an important omission.

Here he remarks :—“It appears to me to be certain that the writer here means to say that Hezron and Hamul were *born in the land of Canaan*, and were among the seventy persons (including Jacob



himself and Joseph and his two sons) who *came into Egypt* with Jacob.” Dr. Colenso then goes on to argue—

“ Now Judah was *forty-two* years old, according to the story, when he went down with Jacob into Egypt. But if we turn to Gen. xxxviii., we shall find that, in the course of these forty-two years of Judah’s life, the following events are recorded to have happened :

“ (i) Judah grows up, marries a wife—‘ at that time,’ v. 1, that is, after Joseph’s being sold into Egypt, when he was ‘seventeen years old,’ Gen. xxxvii., 2, and when Judah, consequently, was twenty years old—and has, separately, three sons by her.”

“ (ii) The eldest of these three sons grows up, is married, and dies. The second grows to maturity, (suppose in another year,) marries his brother’s widow, and dies. The third grows to maturity, (suppose in another year still,) but declines to take his brother’s widow to wife. She then deceives Judah himself, conceives by him, and in due time bears him twins, Pharez and Zarah.”

“ (iii) One of the twins also grows up to maturity, and has two sons, Hezron and Hamul, born to him, before Jacob goes down into Egypt.”

“ The above being certainly incredible, we are obliged to conclude that one of the two accounts must be untrue. Yet the statement that Hezron and Hamul were born in the land of Canaan, is vouched so positively by the many passages above quoted, which sum up the ‘seventy souls,’ that to give up this point, is to give up an essential part of the whole story”—pp. 60, 61, 62.

The first question which requires here to be decided is, were Hezron and Hamul really born in *the land of Canaan*, as Dr. Colenso positively asserts? Now, I must confess, if we read Gen. xlv., 12, in

the way the Bishop has done, it would appear that they were. But upon what authority did he alter the punctuation, nay more, why did he omit the verb "were" altogether? The omission admits of no excuse, for whether he quoted from the English version or direct from the original, in both of these the verb is given. The passage accordingly reads, "And the sons of Judah ; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah ; but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul." The omission or insertion of a little word often affects very materially the sense of a sentence, and here the use of the verb "were" is particularly important. A mere glance at the passage discloses to us that the phrase, "And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul," is to be considered as parenthetical ; this is clearly indicated by the abruptness with which the sentence is introduced.\* If we compare the enumerations of the other children of Israel in the chapter, we find quite a different phraseology ; as, for example, in verse 13, we read, "And the sons of Issachar; Tola, and Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron ; but it does not say, "And the sons of Issachar; *were* Tola," &c. Even in verse 17, where we have a similar introduction of great-grandsons, we read, "And the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel ; and not, "And the sons of Beriah *were* Heber and Malchiel." The mentioning

---

\* We often meet with parenthetical sentences in Scripture, and they are generally indicated in the original by the use of certain accents. See, for example, Gen. xv., 13, *vaavadum veinnu otham*,—"and they shall serve them and they shall afflict them."



of Hezron and Hamul in verse 12 is easily accounted for. After the sons of Judah had been enumerated, the narrative adds, "but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan," and then, after a suitable pause, goes on to say, "And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul, indicating thereby that these were to supply the place of those who had died; but by no means intending us to believe that they were born in the land of Canaan, and that they went down into Egypt with Jacob.

But Dr. Colenso asks, if these had been born in Egypt, and yet are enumerated with these that have come down with Jacob, "why are not the children named of *all* Jacob's grand-children, as well as those of Pharez and Beriah, except that the latter only are intended to be understood as born in the land of Canaan?"

I reply, that with regard to the two sons of Beriah, it is very probable that they had been born in the land of Canaan, for, as I have already shown, the phraseology is quite different in enumerating the sons of Beriah in verse 17, to that employed in mentioning the sons of Pharez, in verse 12. But even supposing they had been born after Jacob had come into Egypt, would there be any thing so very marvellous in two great-grandsons being mentioned in the family of Jacob, to the exclusion of others? The two sons of Beriah may have distinguished themselves in some way, and for reasons *now unknown* the patriarch raised them to the dignity of *heads of families*, and consequently includes them in the genealogy. As regards the two sons of Pharez, the

reason why they are mentioned is obvious, inasmuch as Hezron was one of the direct ancestors of David and of Christ—see Matt. i., 3. The sons of Jacob had already been enumerated in the genealogy of Isaac, but in Gen. lxvi. we have the genealogy of Jacob ; and as Hartmann justly observes, “ In giving this genealogy, it would indeed be of little consequence to inform us where the grand-children were born, but highly important indeed not to omit any in the enumeration. Otherwise it were reasonable to expect a second genealogical view, relative to the increase of the patriarchal family in Egypt. But such statistical information is not to be found.” The design of the sacred writer evidently was, to give the number of Jacob’s family who was living at the time of his death, with a view to shew the wonderful increase of the Israelites during their stay in Egypt. Hence we read in Exodus i., 5, “And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls,” and in verse 7, “And the children of Jacob were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceedingly mighty, and the land was filled with them;” compare also Deut. x., 22. I maintain, therefore, that the occurrence of the names of Hezron and Hamul in this genealogical account of Jacob’s family does not necessarily imply that they went with him into Egypt. Indeed, it is very doubtful whether the four sons of Reuben, mentioned in this genealogy, had all been born at the time of the descent into Egypt. We read in Genesis xlii., 37, “And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring



him (Benjamin) not unto thee ;” from which it would appear that at that time he had only two sons, or he would not have limited the offer to that number. The same may be said as regards some of the sons of Benjamin, he is so constantly represented as a young man (see Gen. xliii., 8, 29; xlv., 20, 30, 31) that one can hardly conceive that he should at that time have had already ten sons, when, at the farthest, he could only have been twenty-four years old. Dr. Colenso, in reply to Hengstenburg, says,

“A whole year appears to have elapsed, according to the story, between the first journey and the second, (xlv., 6,) and after that, some time elapsed before Jacob went down to Egypt. At all events, the interval between the time of Reuben’s speech and that of Jacob’s migration, was quite long enough for two sons to have been born to Reuben in the land of Canaan.”

I am ready to admit that such may possibly have been the case, still the chances are in favour of their having been born in Egypt. As regards the ten sons of Benjamin, he remarks,

“We have shewn above that Benjamin, though called a ‘youth,’ was now more than twenty-two years old, according to the story, at the time of Jacob’s migration. It is, therefore, quite possible that he may have had ten sons, perhaps by several wives.”

It is just “possible” that such may have been the case, though, I must say, highly improbable. I will not take up the line of argument here, which Dr. Colenso has adopted throughout his book—that unless a thing is distinctly mentioned, we must not assume the possibility of its having taken place. Such a rule would here be altogether fatal to his own arguments.

Dr. Colenso seems to lay great stress upon the expression, "All the souls *that came with Jacob into Egypt*, which came out of his loins, were threescore and six;" but he must have been aware that the term "all" is frequently used in Hebrew as it is often with us, in a limited sense, referring frequently only to the greatest part of the things spoken of. In Gen. vi., 17, we read, "And behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy (*kol*) all flesh wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven;" but "all" cannot include Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, nor those living creatures which could subsist in the water. Again, in Exod. ix., 25, it is said, "And the hail smote (*kol*) every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field," and yet in chapter x., 15, we read, that the locusts "did eat (*kol*) every herb of the land, and (*kol*) all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left," and many more examples might be adduced. We frequently make use of similar expressions, for instance, when we say "All the Poles are in arms," we do not wish to be understood all without an exception. And so, likewise, when it is said, "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt," it may mean the greatest number of them, though not necessarily "all." That this is the correct view of the subject is quite evident from ch. xlv., 27, where it is said, (*kol*) "all the souls of the house of Jacob which came into Egypt were three score and ten;" but in this number are included Joseph and his two sons who were there already—the two latter, indeed, were born there.



The discrepancy which Dr. Colenso finds in the passage before us admits, however, of another explanation. If we take the expression in Genesis xxxviii., 1, "And it came to pass at that time," in a larger sense, and suppose the events recorded in this chapter to have taken place some years before Joseph was sold into Egypt, in that case Hezron and Hamul might have been born in the land of Canaan, considering that the Hebrews married at an early age—I have known marriages in Germany to have taken place at the age of thirteen, though this is very rarely the case.

The reader will perceive, on referring to the Bible, that this chapter interrupts the narrative of Joseph, merely for the purpose of introducing some particulars connected with the family history of Judah, which are chiefly important as having a bearing upon the genealogy of our Saviour. It was, probably, introduced here as being the most convenient place, although, as stated before, the events had previously transpired. The celebrated Jewish commentator, Aben Ezra, has pointed out that the phrase, "at that time," is sometimes used in an indefinite sense, referring to occurrences which had taken place many years ago, as, for example, Deut. x., 7, it is said, "From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah," but in verse 8, the sacred writer goes on to say, "At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the Ark of the covenant of the Lord, which, according to Num. iii., 6, had taken place thirty-eight years ago. Le Clerk shews that in the New Testament, also, the phrases "at that time,"

“in those days,” are, in several instances, used in a larger sense. Though this view of the subject has been adopted by several able writers, I must still say that the explanation which I have first given is, in my opinion, the most satisfactory of the two.

I quite agree with Dr. Colenso, that the argument of Hengstenberg, Kurtz, and Poole, who maintain that “Hezron and Hamul, though born in Egypt, may yet be said to have come down among those who came into Egypt, because they came hither in their father’s loins,” is exceedingly feeble and unsatisfactory, but it is no proof that the statement in the Mosaic narrative must involve “a manifest contradiction.” All it amounts to is, that these writers have taken a wrong view of the subject, and, surely, there is nothing strange in this, when we know that the ablest men in other learned professions have, at times, formed wrong ideas.

---



## ARTICLE IV.

---

### THE EXTENT OF THE CAMP, COMPARED WITH THE PRIEST'S DUTIES AND THE DAILY NECESSITIES OF THE PEOPLE.

---

In Lev. iv., 11, 12, we read : “ And the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung, even the whole bullock, shall he (the priest) carry forth without the camp, unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire. Where the ashes are poured out, there shall it be burned.”

The above passage forms the theme of the sixth chapter of Dr. Colenso's work, and he remarks, p. 86 :

“ Thus the refuse of these sacrifices would have had to be carried by the priest himself (Aaron, Eleazor, or Ithamar—there were no others) a distance of three-quarters of a mile. From the outside of the camp wood and water would have had to be fetched for all purposes, if, indeed, such supplies of wood or water, for the wants of such a multitude as this, could have been found at all in the wilderness,” &c. And p. 88 he goes on to say : “ The supposition involves, of course, an absurdity. But it is our duty to look plain facts in the face.”

If, indeed, the English version—upon which the Bishop's arguments are founded—convey to us the true meaning of the original Hebrew, or if the words of that version must necessarily be taken in a literal sense, then, of course, it would be difficult to conceive how Aaron or any one of his sons could perform all the required work.

But the very fact, that the language, if taken in its strict sense, speaks of an absolute impossibility, would itself surely lead us to infer that the words of the author cannot be rightly rendered or understood : for the question that would naturally present itself to our minds is, what could have been the object of the Great Lawgiver or a Pseudo-Moses in laying down a law which he must have well known could not possibly be performed.

Here, then, as in similar cases, where the English version does not present to us a clear idea of the author's meaning, it becomes our duty to consult the original, or to examine whether the expression may not be idiomatic.

In the present instance, the difficulty which Dr. Colenso finds in the passage under consideration may be readily explained in two ways. In the first place, the verb *rehotsi*, which, in the English version, is rendered " shall he carry forth," has the Hiphil form, and is therefore causative in its signification, so that in reality the primary signification of the verb in question in this conjugation is, *and he shall cause to go out*, denoting not that "he" (the priest) shall carry it out, but that he shall see that it is taken out. So Gen. xix., 5, *hotsiëm elenoo*, literally, cause them (*i. e.*, the men) to come out unto us ; Eng. vers., "bring them out unto us." So likewise in the Chaldee and Syriac, where this conjugation is called *aphel*, as *etho* to come, in *aphel*, *aiti*, to cause to come. And in the Arabic as *kataba*, to write, in the second conjugation, *aktaba*, he caused or made another person to write. From the primary



idea *to cause to perform an action*, there are, however, deduced many accessory significations, and therefore the context must always point out the suitable meaning which is to be selected. As the authorised version was intended for all classes, for the unlearned as well as the learned, the translators have very properly translated the Hebrew verbs in *Hiphil*—it is those that have a causative signification—as best suited the idiom of the English language, for had they retained the Hebrew idiom, in many instances the sense would by no means have been very clear to the ordinary reader. As long, then, as the true meaning of the original is given, though clothed in a foreign garb, it is of little moment by what equivalent it is expressed, but when the rendering of any word or passage would convey an erroneous idea, then no matter in how great an esteem we may hold the authorised version—for it is truly a beautiful version—it becomes our imperative duty to turn to the original.

But, secondly, the expression, “he shall carry forth,” as given in the English version, may easily be explained, without assuming that it is not a correct rendering of the original. We frequently find in Scripture that a person is said to perform an act which he merely orders to be done. Thus, in Gen. xxxvii., 3, it is said : “Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age, *and he made him a coat of many colours*,” which surely means nothing more than that he ordered or caused it to be made. So God is often said to do a thing which He only causes or commands to

be done. For example, in Gen. iii., 21., we read, "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." I have no doubt that Dr. Colenso in his next volume will draw attention to this passage as containing an inconsistency, but it means nothing more than that He prompted or ordered them to do it for themselves. It is, after all, only an idiom such as we constantly employ. A general commands a subordinate officer to take a battery or intrenchment of an enemy, or a builder is said to have erected such or such a building, but no one understands thereby that they have done it themselves. In like manner when it is said, that the priest shall carry forth the bullock with all belonging to it, it is not to be inferred that he should do it by direct agency, but simply see that it is done. But Dr. Colenso will probably ask, by whom was the duty performed, if not by the priest himself. I answer, by the Levites, who were by a direct ordinance from the Lord set specially apart for sacerdotal services in the place of the first born, of the different tribes, to whom such functions, according to ancient usage, belonged. See Num. iii., 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 40, 51.

The tribe of Levi, which numbered 22,000, was divided into three families, and whilst in the wilderness their office was, when the camp moved, to carry the tabernacle, its utensils and furniture, after they had been packed up by the priests, Num. iv., 14 and 15. In order to prevent confusion each family had its special duty assigned. Thus the Gershonites had the charge of the hangings and cords of the tabernacle, for which they were allowed four oxen



and two waggons, Num. iii., 25, 26, iv., 24, 28. The Kohathites carried the ark, the table of shew bread, &c. These they had to carry upon their shoulders, Num. iii., 31, iv., 4-15, vii., 9. The Merarites, who had under their charge the more substantial parts of the tabernacle, such as the bars, boards and pillars, &c., had four waggons and eight oxen allowed, Num. iii., 36, 37, iv., 31, 32, vii., 8. But when the camp halted for a time in one place, then these families pitched their tents in the proximity of the tabernacle, namely, the Gershonites on the west, Num. iii., 23, the Kohathites on the south, Num. iii., 29, the Merarites on the north, Num. iii., 35, and the priests on the east, Num. iii., 38. And their duty, whilst the tabernacle was stationary, was to assist Aaron and his sons in taking care of and attending on the tabernacle, only they were not allowed to take part in the services of the altar, Num. xviii., 2-7. It is true that, except the general command that the Levites should have the care of the tabernacle, it is not specially recorded in what particulars they were to assist the priests, for it is merely stated "that they may be joined unto thee, and minister unto thee," Num. xviii., 2; but as the prohibition is clearly laid down, that "they shall not come nigh the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar," Num. xviii., 3, of course it follows that in every thing else they were to render their services to the priests, and among those, the bringing of water, wood, or carrying out of the bullock, with all that pertains to it, out of the camp to be burned, &c.

As the reader has now before him an outline of

the manner in which the tabernacle was moved from place to place by the Levites, I would ask, is the description, as given in the book of Numbers, such a one as would be given if it were mere fiction? What imposter would have troubled himself with particularising what portion was carried by this or that family, or have dreamed of specifying the number of oxen and waggons that were assigned according to the weight and quantity that was to be carried, or would have cared as to what family pitched its tent east or west, south or north? No, it appears to me, that the more we "look the plain facts in the face," the more becomes the truth of the Mosaic narrative apparent.

But Dr. Colenso objects also to the distance that the refuse of these sacrifices would have had to be carried, and the wood and water that would have had to be fetched from the outside of this great camp, besides other great inconveniences which must arise in such a vast and crowded camp. He says :

"The two millions of people, without making any allowance for the tabernacle itself, and its court, and the 44,000 Levites who pitched around about it, the camp must have covered, the people being crowded as thickly as possible, an area of 8,000,000 of square yards, or more than 1,652 acres of ground,"—pages 85, 86.

And a little further on he remarks :

"Upon this very moderate estimate, then, which in truth is far within the mark, we must imagine a vast encampment of this extent, swarming with people more than a mile-and-a-half across in each direction, with the tabernacle in the centre."

This, however, is only a moderate view of the matter.



“How much greater becomes the difficulty,” observes Dr. Colenso, “if we take the more reasonable allowance of Scott,” who says, ‘this encampment is computed to have formed a moveable city of twelve miles square,’ that is, about the size of London itself.”

For argument sake, I have no objection to adopt Mr. Scott’s computation. I have shown that the work, which Dr. Colenso assumed to have been performed by Aaron, or one of his sons, could be, and no doubt was, performed by the Levites. At the time that this tribe was set apart, there were no less than 8,580 men fit for service, that is, between the age of 30 and 50, the period assigned by law during which they were to serve, Num. iv., 3, 47, 48. This, then, removes at once all the difficulty as regards the distance that things had to be carried or brought, even if it were four or five miles, when there were so many persons to perform the duty; though I shall presently show that the distance need not necessarily have been a mile. Dr. Colenso evidently looked upon the encampment of the Israelites as a compact body, and hence one great difficulty after another presented itself to his view; but why he should thus have viewed the encampment, I am altogether at a loss to comprehend. All the difficulties, however, which the Bishop regards as insurmountable—(see his book, pages 86, 87)—and which he says must naturally arise in a camp composed of two millions of people, disappear at once, when we assume—and which is only reasonable—that the Israelites would study their own comfort and convenience, and pitch their tents at a suitable distance. That such has been their practice there is no difficulty in showing.

In order to make my remarks more intelligible, the reader must permit me to digress somewhat from the subject. In Gen. xlix. we have recorded, that Jacob before his death called his twelve sons together in order to give them his last blessing. These prophetic blessings, or communications, as they may perhaps be more properly called, have, however, respect mainly to their posterity; hence it was that the lineal descent of each of his sons was guarded with the greatest care. Even to this day the Jews profess to trace their genealogy to those who were descended from the Levites and from the house of Aaron; for the Jewish prayer-book contains a blessing which can only be pronounced by one who is directly descended from that house. During the Egyptian bondage the descendants of the sons of Jacob formed themselves into twelve families, each having its own elder or chief. In Exod. iii., 16, God commands Moses, "Go and gather the elders of Israel together." And whenever Moses had any thing to communicate to the Israelites he always did so through the elders—Exod. xii., 21. Now, the Hebrew word *zekenim* denotes, old men—elders—chief men, like the Arabian word *sheikh*—an old man, also a chief of a tribe. Now, there can be no doubt that when the Israelites departed from Egypt, each family or tribe was marshalled under its own banner and led by a chief or elder. Each tribe, would of course, whether during the march, or whilst encamping, keep at such a distance from each other, as the exigencies or circumstances of the case might require. Thus we have the people of Israel divided into *twelve com-*



*panies* instead of massing them all together, as Dr. Colenso would have it. I would beg the reader to bear the above remarks in mind, as I shall have again to refer to them, when I take up some other of Dr. Colenso's objections to the Mosaic narrative. But to return to our subject, when the Israelites encamped at Mount Sinai, which was in the third month after their departure, Exod. xix., 1, God commanded Moses to number the children of Israel, and to assist him in this task he was to take "a man of every tribe ; every one head of the house of his fathers"—Num. i., 1-15. Thus it will be seen that the tribes were already formed. In ch. ii. certain regulations are laid down how the tribes should encamp ; in verse second, it is said, "Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of his father's house ; far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch." And further on in the chapter is described how the tribes were to encamp, namely, three to the east, three to the south, &c., forming, as it were, an immense square, with the tabernacle in the centre, around which pitched the three families of the Levites and the families of Moses and Aaron, forming again a smaller square. There is not a word said how near each camp should be one to another, and therefore we may presume that each tribe took up as much ground as was required for all purposes. The expression "far off," however, clearly indicates that a large space was to be left between the tabernacle and the encampments of the tribes, and was no doubt intended as a place where all refuse that was not burned

might be buried. Dr. Colenso will perhaps say, that the Hebrew word *minneged*, denotes *over against*, as given in the margin of the English Bible; but it cannot be denied that it is frequently employed in in the sense of "far off," and Gesenius, in his Lexicon, quotes this very passage among others, where the word has this signification. Dr. Robinson in his *Biblical Researches*, vol. I., page 141, remarks :

"The encampment before the mount, as has been before suggested, might not improbably include only the head-quarters of Moses and the elders and of a portion of the people; while the remainder, with their flocks, were scattered among the adjacent valleys."

And at page 176, he says:

"We, too, were surprised as well as gratified to find here, in the most inmost recesses of those dark granite cliffs, this fine plain spread out before the mountain; and I know not when I felt a thrill of stronger emotion, than when, in first crossing the plain, the dark precipices of Horeb rising in solemn grandeur before us, we become aware of the entire adaptedness of the scene to the purposes for which it was chosen by the great Hebrew Legislator."

From what has been said, we may now sum up the results as follows : and first, we have shown that so far from "the priest having himself to carry on his back, on foot, from St. Paul's to the skirts of the Metropolis," the skin and flesh, the head and legs, the inwards and dung, even the whole bullock, there were 8,580 Levites to perform that work, and that they had merely to carry it to the outside of the square formed by the camp of the Levites, which would hardly exceed half a mile in any direction.



And so likewise as to the bringing of wood and water, if these were not at hand.

Secondly, inasmuch as the other tribes pitched their camps also in the form of a square, and each tribe taking up as much room as was necessary—for there was no want of room—the people had only “to carry out their rubbish” to the outside of their respective camps, and so likewise in bringing wood and water, if it was not nearer at hand. There was not the slightest necessity for the occupants of one camp to pass through the camp of another, for any purpose whatever. And it is well to observe here, that this order of encampment was maintained whenever the entire company halted. Dr. Colenso’s objection, with regard to the supply of wood and water for the wants of such a multitude in the wilderness, is answered in the next article.

---

## ARTICLE V.

---

### SUPPLY OF WOOD AND WATER IN THE WILDERNESS.

---

Bishop Colenso in his book, p. 86, remarks :

“From the outside of this great camp, wood and water would have had to be fetched for all purposes, if, indeed, such supplies of wood or water, for the want of such a multitude as this, could have been found at all in the wilderness—under Sinai, for instance, where they are said to have encamped for nearly twelve months together. How much wood would remain in such a neighbourhood after a month’s consumption of the city of London, even at midsummer.”

It is hardly possible to judge, from the present state of a country, what its capabilities and resources may have been upwards of 3,000 years ago. The hand of man, and the action of the elements, may have effected such material changes during so many centuries, as to alter altogether the appearance of a country. The name of Black Forest would scarcely now be considered an appropriate appellation of that district of Germany, forming one of the four circles of the kingdom of Würtemberg, its dense woods having given place to large towns and thriving villages, surrounded by well cultivated fields ; and without going to the continent of Europe, we may find numerous illustrations even in this compara-



tively new country. The conclusion, therefore, at which Dr. Colenso seems to have arrived, that because the desert through which the Israelites wandered does not now furnish any large quantity of wood, that therefore it could never have done so, is altogether unreasonable. Happily, however, we can bring something more than mere conjectures in support of the truth of the Mosaic narrative.

The rude hand of the Bedawin, and the torrents which descend with great violence from every mountain during the rainy season, and rush through the numerous wadys—or water courses of the desert of Sinai—together with the terrific storms which often sweep over the wilderness, have no doubt all contributed to render the peninsula of Sinai such a waste as it at this time presents to the traveller ; still there remains sufficient evidence to show conclusively that its resources must have been far greater 3,000 years ago.

In the first place, I may remark here, that the English terms *wilderness*, *desert*, do not always convey the correct sense of the Hebrew word *midbar*, which properly denotes an uncultivated tract of land, an open country, or open fields, adapted for pasture ; hence we have in Scripture such expressions as “the pastures of the open fields,” rendered in the English version, “the pastures of the wilderness,” Psal. lxxv., 13, Eng.ver., verse 12—“the open country and its cities,” Eng. ver., “the wilderness and its cities,” Isa. xlii., 2. But as in the east uncultivated lands, and extended plains, from the excessive heat and long drought, soon become barren, hence the word is also employed sometimes to denote a sterile region.

The use of the Hebrew word *midbar* does therefore not necessarily imply that the place denoted thereby is void of vegetation. It is well known that even the desert of Arabia, which is entirely burned up with excessive drought in summer, furnishes after the autumnal rains plenty of pasture for the flocks of the Bedawin during the entire winter and spring, and it is only when the dry season commences, that they retire to the mountains, or such districts where pasture and water may be obtained.

In the second place, I may observe, that at the time when the Israelites passed through the peninsula of Sinai, it was already inhabited by powerful nations, such as the Midianites and Amalekites. The latter, especially, must have been a numerous people, since they were able to cope with the Israelites—Exod. xvii. If, then, the peninsula of Sinai furnished sufficient wood for these nations, surely Dr. Colenso will admit that it is no great stretch of imagination on our part to assume, that it likewise furnished sufficient for the Israelites, who, after all, did not remain for any very great length of time in one place.

But without going so far back, there is little difficulty in proving that even in modern times there existed plenty of wood in the peninsula. The *shittim* of Scripture, and *al sunt* of the Arabians, from which the gum arabic is obtained, is an acacia which obtains a great height ; its wood is very hard, and when old resembles ebony. It was from this wood that the tabernacle and its furniture were chiefly made. All travellers testify that this tree



grows plentifully in Egypt and Arabia, and that it is still found in some parts of the desert. Dr. Shaw says :

“The acacia tree being much the largest and most common tree in these deserts (Arabia Petræa) we have some reason to conjecture that the *shittim* wood was the wood of the acacia.”

Dr. Kitto, in speaking of *shittim* trees, remarks, the required species is found in either the *acacia gummifera*, or in the *acacia seyal*, or rather in both. They both grow abundantly in the valleys of that region in which the Israelites wandered for forty years, and both supply products which must have rendered them of much value to the Israelites. Dr. Robinson says :

“The only trees throughout this region are the *turfa*, properly a tamarisk, with long narrow leaves and without thorns, the same on which the manna (Arabic, *monn*) is elsewhere found ; and the *tulh* or *seyal*, said by the Arabs to be identical, a species of very thorny acacia, producing a little gum arabic of an inferior quality. This the Arabs sometimes gather and sell, when not too lazy.”

Mr. Stanley, canon of Canterbury, in his work entitled, “Sinai and Palestine,” observes :

“Charcoal from the acacia is, in fact, the chief, perhaps it might be said the only, traffic of the peninsula. Camels are constantly met, loaded with this wood, on the way between Cairo and Suez. And as this probably has been carried on in a great degree by the monks of the convent, it may account for the fact, that whereas in the valleys of the western and the eastern clusters, this tree abounds more or less, yet in the central cluster itself, to which modern traditions certainly, and geographical considerations proba-

bly, point as the mountain of the burning "thorn," and the scene of the building of the Ark, and all the utensils of the Tabernacle from this very wood, there is now not a single acacia to be seen."

In another place the same author remarks :

"A fire, a pipe, lit under a grove of desert trees, may clear away the vegetation of a whole valley."

Rüppel, another eastern traveller, observes :

"The acacia trees have been of late years ruthlessly destroyed by the Bedawins for the sake of charcoal; especially since they have been compelled by the Pasha of Egypt to pay a tribute in charcoal for an assault committed on the Mecca caravan in the year 1823."

Besides the acacia, there are still to be met with in the the desert the palm tree and the tamarisk ; from the latter there exudes a kind of gum called by the Arabs *manna*, though it bears very little resemblance to the manna of the Israelites. These trees, no doubt, were formerly very plentiful in the peninsula of Sinai, particularly the latter, as it is one of the few trees which will grow to a great size even in the arid desert; it was always esteemed on account of the excellence of its wood, which was converted into charcoal, a fact which will readily account for there being so few remaining. I have stated before, that the winter torrents may have contributed greatly in effecting the destruction of the trees in the peninsula. Burckhardt tells us that traces of such a devastation were pointed out to him on the eastern side of Mount Sinai, as having occurred within half a century before his visit. Wellstead, another eastern traveller, had a similar des-



truction pointed out to him as having taken place near Tor in 1832. Mr. Stanley has justly observed :

“ That the greater abundance of vegetation would, as it is well known, have furnished a greater abundance of water, and this would have reacted on the vegetation, from which the means of subsistence would be procured.”

The gardens at Ayun Musa—the wells of Moses—under the care of French and English agents from Suez, and the gardens in the valleys of Jebel Musa—mountain of Moses—under the care of the monks of the convent of St. Catherine, show what may be done by a careful use of such water and soil as the desert affords. Dr. Robinson, in speaking of the latter garden, remarks :

“ The number and variety of fruit trees is surprising, and testifies to the fine temperature and vivifying power of the climate, provided there be a supply of water. The almond trees are very large, and had been long out of blossom, the apricot trees are also large, and, like the apple trees, were now in full bloom. There are also pears, pomegranates, figs, quinces, mulberries, olives, and many vines ; besides other trees and shrubs in great variety.”

May not large tracts of the peninsula of Sinai have been highly cultivated in former days, when it was inhabited by a more numerous and more intellectual and industrious people than the Arabs are, which now dwell there? According to Monconys, even as late as the seventeenth century, the plain of Rahah in front of the convent, which is now altogether bare, was then “ *une grande champagne verte*—“a vast green plain.” (*Journal de Voy*, p. 420.)

I think enough has been said to satisfy the most fastidious, that Dr. Colenso's objection, as to the possi-

bility of a sufficient quantity of wood being obtained in the wilderness to supply the Israelites, is altogether futile; I may, therefore, in the next place, proceed to examine, whether his objection as to the supply of water is founded on more solid grounds.

The sacred narrative no where alludes to the supply of wood, and from this silence itself it may be inferred, that it was found in sufficient quantity throughout the desert. Not so, however, with regard to water; in some places it was either not at all to be had, or did not exist in sufficient quantity, and hence the sacred writer informs us how it was obtained, namely, by immediate intervention of the Deity. It is recorded, that in three places the water was supplied by miracle, and therefore we may without hesitation assume, that in all other places it was obtained from natural sources; for had it been otherwise, surely water would have been provided altogether by miracle, the same as manna for food. But God does not exercise His almighty power as long as the object may be obtained by natural means. When the Israelites came to Marah—a bitter fountain—they could not drink its water, and began to murmur against Moses; but did God provide good water for them by a miracle? No, He showed Moses “a tree,” *Exod. xv., 25*, which, when he had cast some of it into the water, made it sweet. The fountain obtained its name Marah, signifying bitterness, and is now by the natives called Hawarah, its water being still bitter, and is considered by the Arabs as the worst water in the whole peninsula. The Hebrew word *ets*, rendered in the English version,



“a tree,” denotes both a tree, and wood, without reference as to any particular species. It is, however, worthy of notice, that in the peninsula of Sinai there is frequently met with a small thorny shrub, called by the Arabs *ghurkud*, which bears a fruit something like the barberry, very juicy but somewhat acid. This shrub is particularly found to grow around all the brackish or bitter fountains. Now, may not the Israelites, as Burckhardt has suggested, have used “the juice of these berries,” or what I think more in accordance with the signification of the Hebrew word *ets*, the wood of the shrub to render the water more palatable. Thus Providence seems to have provided an easy remedy to render these bitter fountains useful to the inhabitants or travellers that may chance to pass that way.

From the silence of the sacred narrative as to the supply of water, except in the three places where it is recorded to have been miraculously procured, we may reasonably conclude that no want of it was experienced elsewhere. And this supposition is put beyond doubt, by the fact already alluded to, namely, that the peninsula was then inhabited by the Amalekites and Midianites, besides other Arab tribes. I would ask Dr. Colenso from whence they did obtain their supply of water? During the 3,000 years that have elapsed, wells and springs may have been dried up, cisterns may have been filled by the drifting sands of the desert, but that these nations dwelled there at that time is an indubitable fact, recorded in the pages of history, which neither time nor the action of the elements could efface. The supply of water

may have been furnished to the inhabitants of the desert, and hence also to the Israelites as well as to the caravans that constantly passed that way, by springs, wells, or fountains, and cisterns. Thus, in Exodus ii., 15, we are told that Moses fled from Pharoah “and dwelt in the land of Midian ; and he sat down by a well.” In Exodus xv., 27, it is said that the Israelites “came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water.” In the east, cisterns have always been extensively employed, from the earliest times, in gathering up water, and are frequently mentioned in Scripture as well as by travellers. The pit in which Joseph was cast by his brethren was an empty cistern. The Hebrew word *bor* signifies both a cistern and pit. Dr. Robinson assures us that “the main dependence of Jerusalem at the present day is on its cisterns ; and this has probably been always the case.”

In order to give the reader some idea how the wells and cisterns, in which the ancient inhabitants of the peninsula collected rain water, may have disappeared, by being filled up with sand, I need only mention that the extremity of the gulf of Suez is gradually filling up from the constant drifting in of the sand from the northern part of the desert plain. In former days vessels could lay at Kolzum, about one-third of a mile north of the town of Suez, now they cannot approach the place.

Whilst the Israelites encamped at Mount Sinai, there was no difficulty in obtaining a sufficient supply of water—travellers all agree that it is abundant in this mountainous region. I may further remark,



that Moses, during the long period that he kept the flocks of Jethro in this neighbourhood, had often wandered over these mountains, and was therefore well acquainted with the entire locality. And when the Israelites departed from Sinai, Moses prevailed upon Hobab, his brother-in-law, to cast in his lot with the people of God, and afford them the benefit of his thorough acquaintance with the wilderness. "Leave us not, I pray thee," said Moses, "for as much as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes;" in other words, he might perform the office of a guide; his knowledge of the situation of the wells, the places for fuel, &c., rendering him peculiarly qualified to act in that important capacity.

---

## ARTICLE VI.

---

### THE SHEEP AND CATTLE OF THE ISRAELITES IN THE WILDERNESS.

---

In continuation of the last article, and as closely connected with it, I may, in the next place, examine Bishop Colenso's objection as to "the possibility" of a sufficient supply of food being found in the wilderness to support "such a multitude of cattle" as the Israelites are supposed to have possessed. In considering this subject, Dr. Colenso devotes the entire twelfth chapter of no less than twenty pages; quoting largely from Mr. Stanley's "Sinai and Palestine," and also from the writings of other travellers in support of his arguments, and I must give the Bishop credit for having certainly made the most of it, for his arguments, unless very closely examined, undoubtedly appear, if not altogether convincing, at least very plausible. But let us see how his reasoning will stand the test of close investigation. Dr. Colenso remarks, page 118 :

"The people, we are told, were supplied with manna. But there was no miraculous provision of food for the herds and flocks. They were left to gather sustenance as they could, in that inhospitable wilderness."

And a little further on, he says,

"And, first, it is certain that the story represents them as possessing these flocks and herds during the whole of the forty years which they spent in the wilderness. Thus, in



the *second* year, Moses asks, 'Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them to suffice them?'—Num. xi., 22. And in the fortieth year we read, 'The children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle'—Num. xxxii., 1. This, it is true, is said, immediately after the capture of a great number of cattle and sheep from the Midianites—Num. xxxi. But the spoil, in that case, was divided among all the people. And, therefore, if the tribes of Reuben and Gad could still be distinguished among the rest, as having the great multitude of cattle, they must have been so noted before the plunder of the Midianites. Accordingly, we find that at the end of the *first* year, they kept the second passover under Sinai, Num. ix., 5, and, therefore, we may presume, had at that time, as before, 200,000 male lambs of the first year at their command, and two millions of sheep and oxen also at hand."

In reply, I remark, inasmuch as Moses had spent a considerable time in the desert of Arabia, in the vicinity of Sinai, feeding the flocks of Jethro, a Midianitish prince, whose daughter Zipporah he married, he was perfectly acquainted with the country and its resources, and would certainly not have permitted the Israelites to bring "herds and flocks" into the wilderness had he not been aware that a sufficient supply of food could be obtained for them. Moses, from all that he had seen which God had done for the children of Israel, would firmly rely on His assistance, and that He would not allow His chosen people to perish in the desert, but provide for them all that was necessary. Why, then, should Moses make mention of herds and flocks at all in connexion with the wandering of the Israelites in the wilderness, when, indeed, their maintenance involved an impossibility? If a person were to write the history

of a nation, and in order to appear original, introduced some extraordinary statements, would he not say something which, although it might have no foundation in truth, still would not absolutely be contrary to common sense? And why should we suppose Moses, or any person after him, to have introduced into the narrative of the Exodus such statements, which the writer must have known would never be believed, and, whilst no object whatever was to be gained by it, would only tend to render the veracity of the whole history exceedingly doubtful. The Bible neither asks nor requires any indulgence at the hands of the critic, it will stand the test of the closest scrutiny; but it does ask, and has a right to expect an honest and impartial investigation, which, I regret to say, it does not always receive.

When we minutely examine the account which Moses gives of the Exodus, we cannot but admire the clearness and precision with which every occurrence of importance is described, leaving no room either for misconception or cavilling. In speaking of the manner in which the Israelites were fed with manna for forty years during their wandering in the desert, Moses distinctly tells us, that God caused it to rain from Heaven, Exod. xvi., 4, 14, 15, as if to guard against the question being raised whether it was not the gum that exudes from the tamarisk, still called by the Arabs *monn*. When he renders the bitter waters of Marah sweet, he informs us, that God showed him a tree or wood, Exod. xv., 22, so that it might not be thought that he, by his own wisdom, discovered the desired remedy. Nor is the



sacred writer less explicit in his narrative of the miraculous provision of quails, Exod. xvi., 12, 13, Num. xi., 13, 32. His language is so plain as to preclude the idea, that large flights of this bird had naturally made their appearance in the peninsula, for although such flights of quails are annually observed to visit the islands of Malta, Sicily and the kingdom of Naples, yet they are not known to have visited the peninsula of Sinai, and even if they had, the language "And there went forth a wind from the Lord and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp," shows that they were providentially provided. I may observe here, that the Hebrew "*selav*," "quail," is not the large red-legged crane, about three feet high, called by the Arabs *nuham*, which visits sometimes in large flights this vicinity, as Foster and others have supposed. The Arabic name for the quail is *selwa*, which it will be seen is very like the Hebrew word. In speaking of the miraculous production of water from the rock, Exod. xvii., 6, 7, Moses was equally careful that his language should not be misconstrued and supposed to have been produced by natural means.

Now, with these plain accounts of the miraculous provision of food and water before us, I would ask, is it reasonable to suppose that if there had been any want either of wood for fuel, or of food for the cattle, that the inspired writer would not likewise have mentioned how they were obtained? God so ordered the course of things, that they obtained whatsoever was needful by natural means, or, if they failed, by a miraculous interposition. Surely, he "That turned

the rock into a standing water; the flint into a fountain of waters," Psalm. cxiv., 8, could also have caused the earth to yield grass, had it been necessary.

The only just and reasonable inference, therefore, that can be drawn from the silence of the sacred narrative, as regards the supply of wood for fuel, and food for cattle, is, that these things existed, and hence no miraculous interposition was necessary.

But I must here again remark, that at the time of the Exodus the peninsula of Sinai was inhabited by the Amalekites, Midianites, and many other Arabian tribes who led a strictly pastoral life, and were entirely dependent upon their flocks for subsistence. How could they have remained in that place had it not furnished sufficient pasturage for their herds and flocks? Why should not the ancient inhabitants of the peninsula have cultivated the most arable parts of the country? The want of rain cannot be urged as a reason, for the same objection would equally hold good as regards Palestine, where rain during the summer season is regarded as an exceedingly strange phenomenon. Rabbi Joseph Schwarz says, "During sixteen years' residence in the Holy Land it rained only once in summer, which created such a sensation in the whole of Palestine, as though the entire world had been thrown out of its course." As to a supply of water, they could have no difficulty in obtaining it by the same means as it is obtained in Palestine, by collecting rain-water in large tanks or reservoirs, wherever a sufficient quantity could not be procured from natural springs or wells. Dr. Crichton, in his history of Arabia and its people,



says, "Without reservoirs, the greater portion of Arabia must have remained unpeopled and even impervious to man," *page* 21. But perhaps it will be said, that the land itself is of such an arid and barren nature as to be wholly unfit for cultivation. No doubt such is its present appearance, but was it so 3,000 years ago? It must be remembered, that many centuries have now passed away since any care or labour was bestowed upon it, but has been left to the mercy of the drifting sands, the scorching sun, and the violence of the winter torrents. But does the peninsula of Sinai stand altogether alone in this respect? Does it not equally apply to a great part of the Holy Land? Does not every traveller that visits Palestine exclaim in astonishment, what, are these bare, stony hills, and deserted parched valleys, indeed the land flowing with milk and honey! Let us hear what eastern travellers say on this subject :

Dr. Olin says, "The entire destruction of the woods which once covered the mountains, and the utter neglect of the terraces which supported the soil on the steep declivities, have given full scope to the rains, which have left many tracts of bare rock where formerly were vineyards and cornfields."—*Travels in the East*, vol. ii., 428

Mr. Stanley observes, "The forest of Hareth, and the thicket wood of Ziph, in Judea; the forest of Bethel; the forest of Sharon; the forest which gave its name to Kirjath-jearim, the city of forests, have long disappeared. Palm-trees, which are now all but unknown on the hills of Palestine, formerly grew, as we shall presently see, with myrtles and pines on the now almost barren slopes of Olivet; and groves of oak and terebinth, though never frequent, must have been certainly more common than at present. The

very labour which was expended on these barren hills of Palestine in former times has increased their present sterility. The natural vegetation has been swept away, and no human cultivation now occupies the terraces which once took the place of forests and pastures."—*Sinai and Palestine*, page 121.

Lord Lindsay remarks: "All Judea, except the hills of Hebron, and the vales immediately about Jerusalem, is desolate and barren."—*Letters*, page 251.

One of the arguments which Voltaire made use of against the veracity of the Bible is, that a country so poor and barren as the Holy Land now is, could never have possessed so numerous a population; and yet, Jewish and Arabian, Greek and Roman writers bear their unanimous testimony to its former fertility, as well as to its having once possessed a numerous and condensed population. It is strange that Bishop Colenso should have followed the footsteps of Voltaire, in his attempting to impugn the truth of the Mosaic narrative of the Exodus.

And where are now the luxuriant fields and fruitful vineyards of Idumea? Where its opulent towns and strong fortresses? The reader may judge of the utter desolation that now reigns there, when I tell him that even the Arabs of the neighbouring region, whose home is the desert, are afraid to enter it, and that the offer of large sums of money will not induce them to conduct the traveller into that desolate region.

I might mention many other countries, once fertile, but now utterly barren; but what has above been said is enough to show that it is altogether impossible to judge from the present appearance of a



country what its resources may have been centuries ago, and I see no reason why the peninsula of Sinai should form an exception in this particular.

“But,” observes Dr. Colenso, page 120, “it cannot be pretended that the state of the country through which they travelled, has undergone any material change from that time to this. It is described as being then what it is now, ‘a desert land,’ a ‘waste, howling wilderness’—Deut. xxxii., 10. ‘Why have ye brought up the congregation of Jehovah into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die? And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us into this evil place? It is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink’—Num. xx., 4, 5. From this passage it appears also that the water from the rock did not follow them, as some have supposed.”

At first sight, these quotations certainly appear to argue strongly against the supposition, “that the state of the country through which the Israelites travelled has undergone any material change from that time to this;” but how does the matter stand when we examine these passages more closely? Let us see. It will be remembered that I have stated in the last article that the Hebrew word *midbar*, rendered in the English version always by “wilderness” or “desert,” in its primary signification really denotes an uncultivated tract of land, fit, however, for pasture, or open fields; but as open fields, when neglected, are liable to become barren, hence the word is employed sometimes in an accessory signification to denote, also, a desert or waste place. The Arabian desert, according to the strict meaning of the Hebrew word, may denote, therefore, simply a

grazing region, and is, in reality, used as such at the present day, at some seasons of the year, by the Bedawins. But whilst the Hebrew term *midbar* is used to denote the Arabian desert in general, the different parts of it are again distinguished by the addition of proper names. Thus we have *midbar sin*, the wilderness of Sin, *midbar paran*, the wilderness of Paran, *midbar tsin*, the wilderness of Zin, &c. Of these the wilderness of Zin is the most terrible, and on examining the passages quoted by Dr. Colenso, it will be seen that they refer to this portion, and not to the entire Arabian desert. The first passage quoted by Dr. Colenso, is Deut. xxxii., 10, and there we read, "He (God) found him" (*i.e.*, assisted him) "*beerets midbar*," in a pasture land, (English version, "desert land,") and in the waste howling "*yeshimon*," "wilderness," &c. Here, it will be observed, there are two entirely different words employed in the original ; the first, being the usual one by which an open tract of country or pasture land is expressed, and the second, which denotes a waste place ; the passage, therefore, means, that whether in the more fertile portion of the desert, or in the most desolate part of it, God assisted Israel, "and kept him as the apple of the eye." Dr Colenso's second quotation is found in Num. xx., 4-5, "And why have ye brought up the congregation of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there?" &c. To what part of the Arabian desert does the pronoun "this" refer ? The reader will find the answer in the first verse, "Then came the children of Israel into the desert of Zin in



the first month," (*i. e.*, of the fortieth year of their wandering, &c.) Second verse, "And there was no water," &c. Third verse, "And the people chode with Moses," &c. To appease the murmuring of the people God miraculously supplied them with water from the rock ; but the Israelites did not remain long in this place. Dr. Colenso should have quoted here from the beginning of the chapter, and not merely such a portion of it as suited his views.

But Dr. Colenso quotes also Deut. viii., 15 :

"Beware that thou forget not Jehovah, thy God, who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water."

Surely it would not have greatly swelled the pages of Dr. Colenso's book to have given the remaining part of the verse, "who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;" but the mentioning of the bringing forth water from the rock in connexion with the expression "great and terrible wilderness," would have shown too clearly that the wilderness of Zin is meant here. It is worthy of notice, that, in the next verse, where Moses represents to the Israelites how they had been providentially fed with manna, he uses the ordinary term *midbar*, wilderness.

I have yet to examine another and the last quotation which Dr. Colenso adduces, namely, Jer. ii., 6.

"Neither said they, where is Jehovah, that brought us out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelled."

In this passage we have evidently again the more fertile as well as the most arid portion of the Arabian desert alluded to, for in the original two distinct words are employed, namely, "*midbar*," literally, an open country or pasture land, rendered in the English version "wilderness," and "*erets aravah*," literally, a sterile region; English version, "a land of deserts." The other expressions in the passage are partly expressive of the character of the wilderness of Zin, and partly figurative, expressive of great evil, calamity and danger, and are often used in Scripture. See Psalm xliv., 19, 20, Prov. xxvi., 27, Psalm xxxv., 7.

From what has been said, the reader will perceive that there is nothing in the passage which Dr. Colenso has quoted to forbid the supposition, that the peninsula of Sinai was not in former days more fertile than at present; on the contrary, the more arid part being designated by such terms as *aravah*, *yeshimon*, denoting a sterile region, or a waste, conclusively shows that the part denoted by *midbar*, pasture land, must have been of a different character.

Dr. Colenso might have spared himself the trouble of quoting so largely from modern travellers, in order to establish "the present sterility of the Arabian desert," for that is a fact which no one will venture to deny. All that I maintain is, that its present sterility is no criterion that it was so 3,000 years ago. The present desolate state of the peninsula of Sinai, as well as that of Palestine, Edumea, Philistia, &c., is the natural result of the depopulation of these countries, and is, therefore, in itself, an indisputable



proof of the accomplishment of ancient prophecy, and of the immutable truths of Holy Scripture.

In connexion with this subject, I may mention another circumstance, from which the inference may be drawn, that there must have existed even an unusual amount of fertility in the peninsula during the forty years' wandering of the Israelites. The sacred writer informs us, that the manna was always accompanied by "dew," see Exodus xvi., 14, Num. xi., 9, and it is well known when the dew does fall in the east it completely moistens the ground, and keeps in a fertile condition lands which would otherwise be sterile and desolate. In these countries, therefore, where no rain falls from April to September, and the heat of the sun being at the same time very strong, those dews are blessings, the value of which can hardly be sufficiently appreciated in a country where no long droughts prevail. The advantage of these abundant dews is, however, not generally enjoyed, except in hilly regions or in confined valleys; in extensive plains and deserts hardly any dew falls from the middle of May to the middle of August. We may therefore infer, since the dew fell daily with the manna, these plains enjoyed an unusual fertility during the dry summer season. The importance which the Orientals attached to the dew and the great advantages that are derived from it, may be gathered from many passages in Scripture; thus Isaac, in blessing Jacob, says, "Therefore God give thee of the dew of Heaven and the fatness of the earth"—Gen. xxvii., 28. "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon

you"—ii. Sam., i., 21. The Egyptians expressed the importance of *doctrine* or *instruction*, by a hieroglyphic representing the sky dropping dew ; and Moses in his sublime parting address, seems to have used this very technical hieroglyphic imagery :

Give ear, O heaven, and I will speak ;  
 -And hear, O earth, the words of my mouth,  
 My doctrine shall drop as the rain,  
 My speech shall distil as the dew.

Deut. xxxii., 1, 2.



## ARTICLE VII.

---

### TEMPERATURE OF PALESTINE.

---

If Dr. Colenso has failed to discover any discrepancies in the Mosaic narrative of the Exodus, it certainly was not for the want of having diligently searched for them, or for the want of having pressed into his service every little circumstance that might possibly favour his arguments. The Bishop apparently met in one of the works of Hengstenberg, a quotation from Ruppell's *Travels in the East*, to the effect, that "in the mountainous districts it is very cold in the winter nights. Sometimes the water in the monastery of St. Catherine freezes even in February." He also read, that a Mr. Fazakerly, who ascended the mountains of Moses and St. Catherine in the month of February, "found a good deal of snow;" and likewise that Josephus says, *Ant.* iii., 7, 4, "the weather was inclined to snow." As the reader will not be able to find the last quotation, for there seems to be some mistake in the reference, I will supply another instance: "But when Herod had reached Sepphoris (the metropolis of Galilee) in a very great snow, he took the city without difficulty." Josephus, *Wars*, B. iii., ch. xvi., p. 2. "Here," observes Dr. Colenso :

"We have another question raised, which is not generally

taken into consideration at all. The Israelites must have passed the whole of the winter months under Sinai, and must have *found it bitterly cold*. Where, then, amidst the scanty vegetation of the neighbourhood, where at the present time there seems not to grow a single tree fit for firewood—and there is no reason to suppose that it was ever otherwise—did the Israelites obtain supplies of fuel, not only for daily cooking necessities of a population like that of London, but also for relief against the piercing cold of the winter season?”—Pages 134, 135.

That snow sometimes falls in Palestine, and that it also sometimes freezes, admits of no doubt. They are both several times alluded to in Scripture, still they are of very rare occurrence. Ruppell, as it will be seen, only says “sometimes the water freezes,” which is a very indefinite expression, and may mean, once or twice in five, ten, or twenty years; so rare, indeed, is frost in Palestine, that very few travellers think it worth their while to allude to it at all. In order that the reader may see how extravagant the conclusions are which Dr. Colenso has drawn from the passages which he himself has cited, I shall give here a few quotations from the writings of persons who resided some years in Palestine. Rabbi Joseph Schwarz, who was for sixteen years a resident in the Holy Land, gives the following statement in his “Descriptive Geography of Palestine”:

“The temperature of Palestine averages during the winter  $8^{\circ}$  to  $9^{\circ}$  above zero of Raumur’s thermometer;  $50^{\circ}$  to  $53\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$  of Fahrenheit’s. In summer, however, it rises to  $21^{\circ}$  to  $22^{\circ}$ , and not rarely to  $26^{\circ}$ ”—*i. e.*,  $82^{\circ}$  to  $92^{\circ}$  of F.—Page 327.

Mr. Murray, who resided for six years at Damascus, says :



“January and February are the coldest months, but frost is seldom seen and the cold is not severe. I have never known the thermometer fall below 23° or rise above 95.° Snow falls in the higher altitudes, though it is very rare in the low plains.”—*Murray's Hand-book of Syria and Palestine*, vol. 1, page xlviii.

“The cold of winter is not severe, and the ground is never frozen. Snow falls more or less, but even in the higher lands it does not lie long on the ground. Thunder and lightning are frequent in the winter.”—*Kitto's Encyclopædia of Biblical Lit.*, art. *Palestine*, page 638.

Dr. Colenso may well say that the “question” which he here raised “is not generally taken in consideration at all;” the reason is quite obvious, it is such a frivolous one that no one but himself thought it worthy of notice.

I have already shown that there must have existed plenty of wood for fuel in those days in the peninsula of Sinai, and if, therefore, it should have so happened, that a few nights during the very short winter season were unusually cold, I can see no reason why the Israelities should have suffered from the “piercing cold;” when they had the means for relief so readily at hand? I am prepared to bring forward additional testimony from the writings of both ancient and modern travellers to show, that the tamarisk and acacia trees, besides a variety of shrubs, grew plentifully in the peninsula of Sinai, should the proofs which I have already given be deemed insufficient. That those trees are not now met with on the regular caravan routes, is nothing more than what is to be expected.

But to return again to the flocks and herds; Dr. Colenso remarks, page 119,

“Accordingly, we find that, at the end of the *first* year, they kept the second Passover under Sinai, Num. ix., 5, and, therefore, we may presume, had at that time, as before, 200,000 male lambs of the first year at their command, and two millions of sheep and oxen close at hand.”

Dr. Colenso, in another place, solemnly lays down the principle, “that if we are not allowed to take away,” *i. e.*, from Holy Scripture, “we are not allowed to add,” a principle which at once must be admitted by every one who regards the Bible as the infallible Word of God ; but I fear the Bishop must have a somewhat treacherous memory, for he ascribes here to the Israelites such an immense number of cattle, for which he has not the least scriptural authority. The herds and flocks are only incidentally spoken of, and there is no where any reference made as to the exact number. It is true Dr. Colenso contrives to obtain the above figures by calculating the number of lambs required for celebrating the Passover, pages 109, 110, 111, but I shall presently show that he is altogether wrong in his surmises.

No doubt, when the Israelites left Rameses, there went up with them “flocks and herds, even very much cattle”—Exod. xii., 38 ; but those would be greatly diminished by the time they came into the wilderness ; and accordingly we find that already in the second month after their departing out of Egypt, “quails” were providentially provided. Why, then, this miraculous provision of “flesh,” if, indeed, the Israelites had such a large number of sheep and oxen at hand as Dr. Colenso would make us believe they must have had ? In the second year the Israel-



ites murmured again for flesh, and their language clearly indicates that meat had not formed a common article of their food. "Who shall give us flesh to eat? But now our soul is dried away; *there is* nothing at all, besides this manna, before our eyes"—Num. xi., 4, 6. Hear also what Moses said on that occasion: "Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh that we may eat"—Num. xi., 13. What, "two millions of sheep and oxen close at hand," and not enough flesh to feed two millions of people, including children of all ages? The probability is, that the children of Israel had no more cattle with them during their wandering in the peninsula of Sinai than was necessary for sacrifices, for beasts of burden, and to supply milk and perhaps occasionally meat. Of the cattle, goats no doubt constituted the greatest number, as they always formed the principal part of the Hebrew flocks. The goat is better pleased with the neglected wild than the cultivated fields of art; it delights in the shrubby mountain, as its favourite food is the tops of boughs, or the tender bark of young trees; it bears both heat and cold as long as the latter is not too severe. The milk of the goat is sweet and nourishing, and from its skin the leathern bottles to contain wine and other liquids are made in the Levant. The goat is still a favourite with the present inhabitants of the Arabian desert, who keep them in large numbers, and certainly is well fitted for the place; it likewise increases very rapidly in warm climates.

I cannot see why the Israelites should have fared

so badly during their wandering, as some writers will have it. They had the nutritious "manna" in abundance, the milk of their flocks, and no doubt, occasionally meat, though probably not as often as they were accustomed to in Egypt, which caused them to be discontented.

It is well known that in several parts of Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland, the goat constituted at one time the chief possession of the inhabitants, and supplied the hardy natives with what they considered as varied luxury. They lived upon the milk, butter, cheese and oat-bread ; the meat they seldom tasted of, as it was a delicacy which they found too expensive ; the skins, however, served them as beds. Thus, in the wildest solitudes and mountainous retreats, where the landscape presents only a scene of rocks, heaths, and shrubs that speak of wretchedness of soil, these simple people, with their flocks of goats about them, which furnished them with all the necessaries of life, had their enjoyments, and were probably as happy, if not more so, than many who are in affluent circumstances. And why should the case have been different with the Israelites, who in addition had an abundance of manna miraculously provided for them ? If they indeed brought upon themselves unspeakable toil and trouble, and in the end death, it was as a punishment for their gross and sensual appetites, and their constant rebellion against God, for they were made to spend forty years in accomplishing a journey which they might have performed in a few months ; they were to learn, that although the chosen and favoured people of God,



yet that any disobedience on their part to the will of God would be visited with condign punishment.

“But,” observes Dr. Colenso,

“It cannot be supposed, as some have suggested, that the flocks and herds were scattered far and wide, during the sojourn of the people in the wilderness, and so were able the more easily to find pasture. The story says nothing, and implies nothing, whatever of this ; but as far as it proves any thing, it proves the contrary, since we find the whole body of the people together, on all occasions specified in the history.”—Page 19.

And what should have prevented the flocks and herds from being scattered among the numerous Sinaic valleys, where there was plenty of pasture and a good supply of water ; or from being led to the most suitable pasture grounds that the place afforded ? It is true, the narrative does not expressly say so, nor can it be reasonably expected that it should. It was a well known and established practice, from the earliest times, that herds and flocks were taken from place to place in search of pasture ; and there was therefore no necessity of its being here particularly mentioned. It is absurd to expect that the sacred writer should have noticed every little incident connected with the Exodus.

“But,” argues Dr. Colenso,

“If indeed, they had been so dispersed, they would surely have required to be guarded by large bodies of armed men, from the attacks of the Amalekites, Midianites, and others.”

And so, no doubt, every herd would probably be accompanied by an escort, though in reality there was little danger of their being in the *least* molested.

The signal victory which the Israelites gained over the Amalekites, would strike such terror among the other inhabitants of the peninsula, that they would hardly venture to give any offence, but would only be too glad to be permitted to enjoy peaceably their desert homes.

I cannot forbear to notice here, that Dr. Colenso constantly uses the word “story” in reference to the Mosaic narrative ; this, to say the least, is in very bad taste, as it cannot fail to be exceedingly offensive to a great majority of his readers, and as the term is certainly not applicable until the narrative is proved to be mere fiction. I am aware that the term *story*, in its strict acceptation, denotes also *a history*, but according to the common usage of language it is only applied to a fabulous composition. How grating it would be to our ears to hear such expressions as “the story of England,” or “the story of the Peninsular War,” and, surely, we cannot be regarded as being over sensitive when we take offence in seeing such expressions as “the story” —“the story of the Exodus”—“the Mosaic story.”

#### THE NUMBER OF LAMBS REQUIRED FOR THE PASSOVER.

I shall, in the next place, examine Dr. Colenso's objection to the number of lambs that were required to celebrate the Passover.

He assumes that by “taking *ten* as the average number to a lamb, two millions of people would require about 200,000 lambs of the first year. Taking twenty they would require 100,000. Let us take the mean of these, and suppose that they required 150,000. We may assume that there were as many female lambs of the first year, making



300,000 lambs of the first year altogether." But he goes on to say: "But these were not all. For, if the 150,000 lambs that were killed for the Passover comprised all the males of that year, there would have been no rams or wethers left of that year for the increase of the flock; and as the same thing would take place each successive year, there would never be any rams or wethers, but ewe sheep innumerable. Instead, then, of 150,000, we may suppose 200,000 male lambs of the first year, and 200,000 female lambs, making 400,000 lambs of the first year altogether. Now, a sheep-master, experienced in Australia and Natal, informs me that the total number of sheep, in an average flock of all ages, will be about five times that of the increase in one season of lambing. So that 400,000 lambs of the first year implies a flock of 2,000,000 sheep and lambs of all ages. Taking, then, into account the fact that they had also large herds, 'even very much cattle,' we may fairly reckon that the Hebrews must have possessed at this time, according to the story, more than two millions of sheep and oxen."—Page 110.

I have given a full extract to show that if Dr. Colenso has failed to make out a good case, it was not for the want of having tried hard to do so. Josephus, in his "Wars of the Jews," b. vi., ch. 9, p. 6, reckons ten persons on an average to a lamb; but he says "many of us are twenty in a company." But Josephus speaks here of what was the custom in his time, when the Israelites had been settled upwards of a thousand years in the Holy Land. Kurz, whom the Bishop quotes, allows also "fifteen or twenty," no doubt upon the authority of Josephus. But the question here is, not what this one or that one allows, but what does Scripture allow? Bishop Colenso, therefore, in taking these writers as his authority,

has founded his calculation upon a number, for which he has not the slightest scriptural authority.

On turning to Exod. xii., 2, we read: "Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, in the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man *seh leveth avoth* a lamb, according to the house of fathers, a lamb for a house." Here, then, the question arises, what are we to understand by the expression, "house of fathers?" It cannot mean nearly a lamb to every father's house or household, for, in that case the noun *av*, *i. e.*, father, would have been employed in the singular, see Gen. xxiv., 23, xxxi., 30. The true import of the phrase in question must therefore be determined by examining in what sense it is employed in other places. Now I have already stated, that the children of Israel were arranged into tribes, denoted by the Hebrew terms—*shevatim*, *mattoth*; these were again divided into *mishpachoth*, *i. e.*, families, and the families were again subdivided into minor divisions termed *beth avoth*, *i. e.*, houses of fathers, ancestral houses, or households. Thus, we find in Num. i., 2, that the number of the children of Israel was taken, "*lemishpechotham leveth avotham*," after their families, and after their houses of fathers, or households. These houses of fathers or households had their *rashe*, *i. e.*, chiefs or heads, see Exod. vi., 14, Num. i., 4. Now, I think, there can be no doubt, that such a minor division is meant by the expression *leveth avoth*, *i. e.*, house of fathers, in the passage under discussion; and in that case there may have been forty or fifty persons—or even more if two households joined



together—for each lamb. The Egyptian sheep are very large, and a lamb “of the first year” would be more than enough for fifty persons. Besides, it must be remembered, that the paschal lamb was not intended to be feasted upon, but was to be partaken of as a religious and solemn rite. Allowing then forty persons as an average for a lamb, which I think is an exceedingly moderate number, considering that children of all ages are included, we would, in that case, require 50,000 lambs, instead of 150,000 as Dr. Colenso will have it. But does Scripture say, that they must necessarily have been “lambs”? Certainly not. The Hebrew word *seh*, denotes either “a lamb” or “kid,” and in chapter xii., 5, it is distinctly stated, “Ye shall take it out from the sheep or from the goats.” Supposing, now, there had been a scarcity of lambs of the first year, that half of the number required were taken from the goats; the number of lambs would be reduced to 25,000, which, adapting Dr. Colenso’s own calculation, (see above,) would imply that the Israelites at that time possessed 125,000, and not “2,000,000 sheep and lambs of all ages.” From the time the Israelites left Egypt until they came into the Holy Land, they only celebrated once the Passover, and that was at the end of the first year, whilst encamped near Sinai, Num. ix., 5; nor do the Scriptures make mention of any sacrifices being offered during the last thirty-eight years’ wandering in the desert; indeed, from the fact that even the right of circumcision being suspended during that time, we may infer that none were offered.

## ARTICLE VIII.

---

### INSTITUTION OF THE PASSOVER.

---

As the Mosaic narrative is altogether silent as to the number of cattle possessed by the Israelites, either during their abode in Egypt, or whilst wandering in the desert of Arabia, to give any specific number must necessarily be mere conjecture ; nor does it form an essential part of the history of the Jews. A history of England would be perfect without stating the number of cattle owned by the inhabitants—Macaulay certainly does not give it in his “History of England.” The Israelites, being a pastoral people, would no doubt at all times keep such numerous herds and flocks as the localities which they occupied permitted them to do.

Dr Colenso calculates that the Israelites must have had “2,000,000 of sheep and lambs of all ages,” and then, with the assistance of “experienced sheep-masters,” tries to show that “the sheep alone would have required 400,000 acres of grazing land—an extent of country considerably larger than the whole county of Herefordshire or Bedfordshire—besides that which would be required for the oxen, and that, too, by allowing “*five* sheep to an acre,” although according to the information he had received, “in *New Zealand* there are few spots where sheep can



be kept *two* to the acre ; in other places, *one* can be kept per acre. In Australia, some sheep runs are estimated to carry one sheep to an acre, and these I think are of the *best* quality.”—Page 111.

As I have reduced the 2,000,000 of sheep ascribed to the Israelites by Dr. Colenso to 125,000, I might well have dismissed the subject here without any further comment ; but being desirous of examining every point of the Bishop’s argument, and not having myself any experience in the management of sheep, I consulted Professor Buckland, who told me “ that it was perfectly absurd to compare the wild pasture plains of Australia with the rich and fertile land of Egypt. In Australia thousands of acres of sheep run may be had for a mere nominal rent.”

The name Goshen, is apparently of Semitic and not of Egyptian origin, for it occurs also as the name of a city and its environs in the south of Palestine, Josh. xiii., 2, 1st Sam. xvii., 8. As the name is not mentioned by any of the Greek geographers, various opinions existed at one time as to its exact locality ; the best scholars of the present day, however, agree that it was the name of that part of Lower Egypt lying east of the Pelusian branch of the Nile, comprehending the modern province esh-Shurkiyeh. This province in every respect answers to the allusion made to the land of Goshen in Scripture. Jacob and his family dwelling in this territory might well be said to be near Joseph, whether the court of Pharaoh was at Memphis, or what is most probable at Zoan, *i. e.*, Tanis, where, according to Psalm lxxviii., 12, the miracles of Moses were performed. When Jacob

went down into Egypt, “ he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen ; and they came into the land of Goshen”—Gen. xlv., 28. And Joseph went up to meet Israel his father, unto Goshen, v. 29. This shows that the territory must have been situated between the frontier of Palestine and the residence of Joseph ; and points clearly to the province of esh-Shurkiyeh. The land of Goshen is further said to have been “the best of the land,” Gen. xlii., 6, and such apparently is the province of esh-Shurkiyeh to the present day. Dr. Robinson says :

“During my stay in Cairo, I made many enquiries respecting this district ; to which the uniform reply was, that it was considered as the best province in Egypt. This arises from the fact that it is intersected by canals, while the surface of the land is less elevated above the level of the Nile than in other parts of Egypt ; so that it is more easily irrigated. There are here more flocks and herds than any where else in Egypt. The population is half migratory, composed of Fellahs and partly of Arabs from the adjacent deserts, and even from Syria ; who retain in part their nomadic habits, and frequently remove from one village to another. Even now another million at least might be sustained in this district, and the soil is capable of higher tillage to an indefinite extent. So, too, the adjacent desert, so far as water could be applied for irrigation, might be rendered fertile, for wherever water is, there is fertility.”—*Bib. Researches*, vol. i., pages 78, 79.

If, as with certainty it may be assumed, the province of esh-Shurkiyeh is identical with the ancient Goshen, what should have prevented the Israelites from keeping large numbers of cattle. The province we have shown even now enjoys a high state of fertility ; near it are immense tracts of



country which, by the common mode of irrigation, as practised in Egypt, may have been rendered likewise highly fertile, and if these, in the course of time, proved insufficient to supply enough pasture to the increasing flocks, the Israelites like the Arabs would no doubt lead their herds into the fertile parts of the desert.

But Dr. Colenso not only objects to the number of lambs that were required for celebrating the Passover, but likewise to the short notice that the Israelites had for its preparation. He cites Exod. xii., 21–28 ; but as the quotation has nothing whatever to do with his argument—as the reader will find on referring to the Bible—it is not necessary to give it here. With regard to the keeping of the Passover he remarks, however, “That is to say, in *one single day*, the whole immense population of Israel, as large as that of London, was instructed to keep the Passover, and actually did keep it. I have said ‘in one single day’; for the first notice of any such feast to be kept is given in this very chapter, where we find it written, v. 12, ‘I will pass through the land of Egypt *this night*, and will smite all the first born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast.’ It cannot be said that they had notice several days before hand, for they were to ‘*take*’ the lamb on the tenth day of the month, and ‘*kill*’ it on the fourteenth, v. 3, 6 ; and so v. 12 only means to say on *that* night—the night of the fourteenth—‘I will pass through the land of Egypt.’

“For the expression in v. 12 is distinctly *hazze*, “this,” not *hahoo*, “that,” as in xiii., 8, and so v. 14, ‘this day shall be unto you for a memorial.’

It appears to me that Dr. Colenso is here labouring hard to make out that "the tenth day" and "the fourteenth" are one and the same day, and as this result is not to be obtained by any mathematical process, the pronoun "this" is brought forward to produce the desired object. From the expression "this day" being employed in chap. xii., 12, and not "that day," as in chap. xiii., 8, the Bishop takes it for granted that every thing recorded in that chapter must refer to one day, namely, the fourteenth day of the month ; but if he had given the subject a little more consideration, he could not have failed to perceive, that the pronoun "this" particularly refers to "the fourteenth day" mentioned in verse 6, and not to "the tenth day" in verse 5. The language of the sacred writer seems to be so clear that I am rather at a loss to see how it can possibly be misinterpreted. In the third verse of the twelfth chapter, Moses and Aaron are commanded, "Speak ye unto the congregation of Israel, saying, in the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb (or kid) according to the house of *their* fathers," and in the sixth verse, which forms still a part of the same command, it is said, "And ye shall keep it (the lamb) up until the fourteenth day of the same month ; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening." Verses 7-10, contain merely instructions as to the sprinkling of the blood, and the manner in which the lamb was to be eaten. In verse 11, it is said, "And thus ye shall eat it ; *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand ; and ye shall eat



it in haste ; it is the Lord's passover." And why should it be thus eaten ? The reason is assigned in the next verse, " For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite the first born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast," &c. The expression "this night" clearly refers to the night following the evening when the paschal lamb was to be slain, and that was on the evening of "the fourteenth day" mentioned in verse 6, and has no connexion whatever with the tenth day mentioned in verse 3. It is not easy to imagine how Bishop Colenso, in the face of such plain language, can have the boldness to assert that the Israelites had only "one single day's notice to keep the passover," when the Scriptures distinctly assert that they were commanded to take a lamb on the tenth day of the month, and keep it until the fourteenth of the same month, and, therefore, must at least have had four full days' notice, if not more ; for the language implies that the command was given before the tenth day, which, for all we know, may have been as early as on the first or second day of the month. As to Dr. Colenso's argument that the pronoun *hazze*, "this," is employed in verse 12, while in chap. xiii., 8, the pronoun *hahoo*, "that," is used ; all I can say is, that they are in both places used in accordance with the strict rule of grammar ; in the former place "this" refers to a subject just mentioned, and in the latter, "that" refers to one remote ; "and thou shalt show thy son in that day," &c.

The Rabbies assign as a reason why the lamb was to be taken from the flocks four days before it was

killed, that it might not, through a hurry of business—especially at the time of the departure of the Israelites—be neglected until it was too late, and that any blemish might be more readily detected.

But Bishop Colenso himself apparently felt that the language employed in Scripture was too explicit, and that it required stronger arguments than he could possibly bring forward in order to establish his views against such direct declarations; as the last resource he throws out indirectly a hint, that the text may have been corrupted, at least, this seems to me to be the import of his remark; but here is the passage itself. “It is true that the story, as it now stands, with the directions about taking the lamb on the tenth day, and keeping it till the fourteenth, are perplexing and contradictory. But this is only one of the many similar phenomena, which will have to be considered more closely hereafter.”—Page 106.

One can readily understand that it would be a “perplexing” matter to make the tenth and fourteenth day of the month to mean one day; but as to there being any thing “contradictory” in the order being given for a lamb to be set apart on the former day to be made use of on the latter, I venture to say few persons will be able to discover wherein the contradiction lies. We must, however, patiently wait until the Bishop has “considered more closely” this phenomenon.

But, observes Dr. Colenso further, “Moses called for all the elders of Israel”—Exod. xii., 21. “We must suppose, then, that the elders lived somewhere near at hand. But where did the two millions live?



And how could the order to keep the Passover have been conveyed, with its minutest particulars, to each individual household in this vast community, in one day—rather, in twelve hours, since Moses received the command on the same day on which they were to kill the Passover at even?—Exod. xii., 6.”

Moses did not receive the “command on the same day on which they were to kill the Passover at even,” but at least four full days before, and it is impossible to force any other meaning on the words of the text without grossly violating the language of the sacred writer. On returning to Exod. xii., 1-3, the reader will find that the command, as to the keeping of the Passover, was given to Moses and Aaron, to be by them communicated to the congregation of Israel. Accordingly we read in verse 20, “Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and communicated to them the command which he received,” to be by them again delivered to their respective tribes. The language, “Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families,” clearly shows that this command could not have been communicated by Moses to the elders on the fourteenth day, for they were to take the lamb on the tenth day. Nor is it reasonable to suppose, that in a matter of such great importance, the delivery of the command would be left to the last day; for, as Dr. Colenso justly remarks, “it was a matter of life and death, upon the due performance of the divine command it depended whether Jehovah should ‘stride across’ the threshold, and protect the house from the angel of death, or not.”

But Dr. Colenso asks, “where did the two millions

live?" I answer, of course, at Rameses and its immediate neighbourhood, where they had assembled before their departure out of the land of Egypt—Exod. xii., 37. It must not be supposed that they all lived in houses, for those who had collected there would live in their tents. Perhaps, it will be said, that the term *house* is constantly used, and that there is no mention made of tents; but this is no objection, for the Hebrew term *bayith*, denotes *a dwelling* of any kind, whether moveable or stationary.

I may mention here, that it is now generally admitted, that Rameses—one of the cities where the Israelites had to perform such hard labour—was situated in the province esh-Shurkiyeh, (the ancient Goshen,) in the valley of the ancient canal, nearly in the middle part, and was therefore only thirty miles from the Gulf of Suez, a distance which the Israelites might easily pass over in three days. Rameses apparently was also the name of several Egyptian Kings, one of whom probably founded the city and called it after his own name; it denotes in the Egyptian language, *son of the sun*.

But Dr. Colenso has yet another objection; he remarks, "further, we are told that every woman was to borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourned in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment—Exod. iii., 22. From this it would seem to follow that the Hebrews were regarded as living in the midst of the Egyptians, mixed up freely with them in their dwellings. And this appears to be confirmed by the statement, Exod. xii., 35, 36, that when suddenly summoned to depart,



they hastened, at a moment's notice, to borrow in all directions from the Egyptians." And a little further on he says: "But the supposition of borrowing in this way, even if they lived in such a city, (like London,) involves prodigious difficulties," pages 107, 108. True, if the command to borrow had only been given twelve hours before the Israelites set out on their journey, no doubt there would have been some difficulty in its being fully carried out in so short a time; particularly as they had also to prepare for the celebration of the Passover; but the sacred narrative says nothing and implies nothing of the kind. On turning to *Exod. iii., 21, 22*, it will be seen that the passage which Dr. Colenso quotes is not a command but a promise. God, in sending Moses to deliver Israel, declares to him "that when ye go, ye shall not go empty," &c. This passage, therefore, has nothing whatever to do with fixing the time when the command "to borrow" was given, and I cannot understand why Dr. Colenso should have alluded to it at all. But he refers also to *Exod. xii., 35, 36*, in support of his argument, "and the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses, and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, &c." Upon this passage he remarks, "when suddenly summoned to depart, they hastened, at a moment's notice, to borrow in all directions from the Egyptians." Now let us see the result of the Bishop's exegetical labour, when we take the passage just quoted in connexion with verse 34: "And the

people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading-troughs being bound up in their cloths upon their shoulders." That is to say, according to Dr. Colenso's mode of interpretation, the Israelites went about thus encumbered borrowing from their neighbours. The true explanation however is, that Moses, after having stated how urgent the Egyptians were upon the people to depart, so as to leave them no time even to bake their unleavened cakes, verse 33, mentions also in verses 35 and 36, that the Israelites had done—and not did then do it—as Moses had commanded, and that they had asked of the Egyptians vessels of silver, &c., to show that the promise which God had made, *Exod. iii., 22*, was literally fulfilled. Surely, any ordinary Hebrew scholar knows that a verb in the preterite may express an action, performed just now, yesterday, or a hundred years ago, and that therefore the verbs "*asoo*" "*nathan*" in the passage under consideration may be translated, "they had done," "he had given," instead of "they did," "he gave," as in the English version.

But why does Dr. Colenso not make the slightest allusion to *Exod. xi., 1, 2, 3*, where Moses is distinctly ordered to speak to the people, that every man should ask from his neighbour, and every woman from her neighbour, &c.? I have no hesitation in answering the question for him; it marks too clearly the time when the command was given. It cannot be said, that he never read that chapter or did not think of it, for it will be seen that he has quoted verse 4, above. I must say, with all due respect to the Bishop, that this is not fair. In treating upon any



Biblical subject every passage that may have the least bearing upon the subject under consideration should be carefully examined.

It will however be seen from Exod. xi., 1, 2, 3, that the command, "to borrow," was given after the ninth plague, and probably immediately after it, so as to give as much time as possible. It is not stated what time intervened between the ninth and tenth plagues, but very likely it was considerable, in order to give the Israelites plenty of time to make all necessary arrangements for their departure, and also to give them sufficient time to assemble at their place of rendezvous at Rameses. Without venturing, however, to conjecture the precise time when the command to borrow was given to the people, this much is certain, that it was before the command for setting apart the paschal lamb was promulgated.

In connexion with this subject, I may here mention that it has been often urged by the opponents of Scripture, that the command "to borrow" from the Egyptians, what they never intended to return, was not only an act of injustice, but that it favours theft, and is distinctly set forth by the Psalmist as a characteristic mark of the wicked. "The wicked borroweth and payeth not again"—Psal. xxxvii., 21. But the objection may be met upon purely philological grounds. The Hebrew verb *shaal* occurs but in very few instances in the sense "to borrow" in the whole Bible; its primary meaning is *to ask*, having several shades of signification, as—to inquire—to interrogate—to demand—and in these the verb constantly occurs. As for example, I. Kings iii., 5: "In Gibeon,

the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night ; and God said *shaal*, ask or *demand*, what I shall give thee." Again, Psalms ii. 8, "*shaal*, ask or *demand*, of me," &c. There can, therefore, be no objection to render this verb in the passages under consideration by *to ask* or *demand*, and so it has indeed been rendered in all ancient and modern versions, the English alone excepted. Besides, if the sacred writer wished to indicate that the Israelites had only *borrowed* these things, he would no doubt have employed the usual verb *lavah*, *i. e.*, to borrow, quite a different verb as the reader will perceive.—See Deut. xxviii., 12 ; Psalms xxxvii., 12. We maintain, therefore, that the Israelites were not commanded "to borrow," Exod. xi., 2 ; but *to ask* or *demand* of the Egyptians these things as a just payment for their services. In obedience to this command, the Israelites did *ask* of the Egyptians jewels of silver and jewels of gold, which demands were no doubt readily acceded to. Where is the man, however great a miser, that would not gladly give all his earthly goods, if he could thereby prolong his life, even for a short period of time ? Is it at all strange that the Egyptians should readily comply with the demands of the Hebrews, seeing how terrible they had already been made to suffer on their account, and that their prolonged stay might only tend to their utter destruction.\*

---

\* In the Talmud the following story is related, and though its truth cannot be vouched for at the present day, I shall subjoin it, as it well illustrates what has been above advanced :

"When Alexander the Great was in Egypt, an Egyptian prince came to him and said, 'Our nation has always heard that you are so benevolent as to pay, or cause to be paid, all the just claims of your poor subjects. I came therefore to enquire of you if such be really the case?' The king replied in



the affirmative, and enquired of the prince the nature of his demand. The prince then stated that the Jews, who were under his jurisdiction, had several hundred years ago borrowed jewels of silver and of gold from his people, and had not as yet returned them nor paid for them, and he had now come to demand both principal and interest. Alexander wished to know what evidence he could adduce to substantiate his claim. The prince replied, the Bible. This is indeed excellent evidence, said the king; will you allow me three days to examine into the nature of your claim? The prince readily consented to this, and at the same time referred him to Exodus iii., 22, and xi., 2, as evidence. The king then consulted with his secretary, Gaviah ben Pasea, a learned Jew, who, on the morning of the third day, called upon King Alexander, and told him to get the prince when he came to consent, in the first place, that if a balance were due on either side, it should be paid with interest; secondly, that the Bible should be evidence for and against both parties; and, further, to enquire of him if their law did not allow servants and slaves a just and equitable compensation for their services, all of which he will no doubt readily admit. Then refer him to the Bible, where he will find that Jacob and his family or children took all their cattle and all their wealth with them into Egypt; also state that the Israelites were three or four hundred years in bondage to his nation, and when they left Egypt they could not, as slaves, take their property with them; then estimate the value of the property that Jacob and his family took into Egypt, and the interest of it, and also the services of all the Jewish nation for four hundred years, at so much per day for each one; then add the interest, and double both principal and interest, for the Egyptians made them also double their labour, and they had also to find their own materials to make brick. Let him from that sum deduct the small amount of jewels, and there will be such a large balance in our favour that their whole nation will not be able to pay it. Besides, he does not understand our language, for the word *shāāl* means to ask, to demand as a debt or an equivalent, and not to borrow. In support of these allegations the learned secretary referred the king to numerous passages in the Bible. The king was highly delighted with this critical view of the case, and adopted the plan pointed out, and when the prince came, and Alexander explained the whole merits of the case to him, shewing beyond doubt that his nation was largely in debt to the Israelites, the prince fled into a foreign country."

---

## ARTICLE IX.

---

### THE SOJOURNING OF THE ISRAELITES IN EGYPT.

---

Any one who has perused Dr. Colenso's book must have been somewhat surprised at the immethodical manner in which the subjects are arranged. The Bishop commences with a subject in Genesis, then takes up one in Leviticus, from that he goes on to Deuteronomy, then back into Exodus, and so throughout his book. In my replies, I have taken up, and shall continue to take up, the subjects as much as possible according to the manner in which they stand in relation to one another ; and in pursuance of this plan, I shall in the next place examine Dr. Colenso's objection to *the number of the Israelites* at the time of the Exodus, with which he also necessarily connects the period of their stay in Egypt, and the number of generations.—*See his book; chapters xv., xvi., xvii.*

It is obviously essential, before we can form any correct idea of the rapid increase of the Israelites, that we must first ascertain the precise number of years of their sojourn in Egypt. Now it is recorded, Exod. xii., 40, “ And the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelled in Egypt *was* four hundred and thirty years.” Here, then, the question arises,



whether we are to understand from this quotation that the Israelites did actually spend the whole of that period in Egypt? Dr. Colenso brings forward strong arguments (ch. xv.) to show that the 430 years cannot mean actual servitude in Egypt, but must also include the sojourning of Abraham and Isaac in a strange land, which, according to the following data, would reduce the number to 215 years of actual residence in Egypt, namely:

From the call of Abraham to the birth of Isaac, (compare Gen. xii., 4, xxi., 5)	25 years.
From the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob, (see Gen. xxv., 26)	60 years.
From the birth of Jacob to his emigra- tion into Egypt	130 years.

—

Making a total of.....215 years.

It is, of course, the object of Dr. Colenso to reduce the stay of the Israelites in Egypt to as short a period as possible, for the shorter the period, the more difficult it will be to account for the unusually great increase. I, for my part, have no hesitation in conceding this point, and allow Dr. Colenso to make as much of it as he can. I am aware that there are some writers who insist upon 430 years' actual residence in Egypt, but I must say that they do not do so without creating insurmountable difficulties, which will at once become apparent from the following remarks: in the first place, St. Paul distinctly dates the 430 years from the promise to Abraham to the giving of the Law, Gal. iii., 17, the first event being held to be that recorded in Gen. xii., 1, 5. Secondly,

the period of 430 years' oppression could hardly be reconciled with the genealogy in Exod. vi., and Num. xxvii., 1. Thirdly, it appears also from Num. xxvi., 59, that Jochebed, the mother of Moses, was the daughter of Levi, and hence Dr. Colenso clearly shows, that even if we allow that she was born to him when 137 years old, that is the last year of his life, she must at least have been 256 years old when Moses was born. On the whole, I think, there can be no doubt that the 430 years must be reckoned from the call of Abraham, when he still lived at Haran, and this agrees likewise with the Septuagint version and Samaritan Pentateuch, which insert in Exod. xii., 40, after "in Egypt," the words, "and in Canaan." It is true, that Gen. xv., 13, "And he said unto Abraham, know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them ; and they shall afflict them four hundred years," apparently favours the supposition of 430 years' bondage, but on referring to the original it will be seen from the accentuation, that the words "*vaavadum veinnu otham*," *i. e.*, "and they shall serve them ; and they shall afflict them," are to be considered parenthetical, so that the passage would read, "Know ye of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs four hundred years." The actual time of their bondage did, however, not extend over the whole of this period. So far, then, as to allowing only 215 years for the period of actual oppression, I perfectly agree with Dr. Colenso ; but here I must again part company with him.



## EXODUS IN THE FOURTH GENERATION.

Dr. Colenso remarks, page 155: "Again, when it is said, Gen. xv., 16, 'in *the fourth* generation they shall come hither again ;' this can only mean in the fourth generation, reckoning from the time when they should leave the land of Canaan, and go down into Egypt." And why, I would ask, are the "four hundred years" mentioned in verse 13 to be reckoned from the call of Abraham, and "the fourth generation" mentioned in verse 16, from the going down of Jacob into Egypt? I can really see no other reason, except that it would suit Dr. Colenso's argument. Is it possible that the Bishop should not have perceived that the two periods mentioned, though expressed in different terms, are one and the same period, and, therefore, must commence and end at the same time? In verses 13, 14, 15 and 16, a solemn declaration is made to Abraham, that his seed should be a stranger in a strange land "four hundred years," that they should be oppressed, but that they should come out of their land of bondage with great substance in "the fourth generation;" or, in other words, at the end of the four hundred years. Dr. Colenso, however, by his singular mode of interpretation, will make us believe that one period commenced when Abraham left Haran, whilst the other began 215 years after that time. The truth is, the primary meaning of the Hebrew word "*dor*" is, *revolution*, hence a period of time, an age, or generation. In the long-lived patriarchal age, a generation seems to have been computed at 100 years,\*

---

\*So among the Romans the word *seculum* originally denoted *an age* or *generation* of men, but afterwards acquired also the secondary signification of *a century*. (See *Censorin de Die natali*, c. 17.)

thus the four generations in verse 16 are equivalent to the 400 years in verse 13. At a later period of time, however, the Israelites seem to have reckoned the duration of a generation, as is now done with us, from thirty to forty years; as, for example, Job xlii., 16, after this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, *even* four generations, *i. e.*, 35 years to a generation; and from certain statements in the book of Job itself, we may infer that Job must have lived in the period between Abraham and Moses. It is therefore evident, from what has been said, that when the promise was made to Abraham that his seed should be delivered from their oppression "in the fourth generation," it means four generations each of 100 years' duration, and must be reckoned from the call of Abraham, and not as Dr. Colenso will have it, "that the Israelites 'came' out in the *fourth* generation from the adults in the prime of life who went down with Jacob," page 159.

As the period of life had at the time of the Egyptian bondage become greatly abridged, it is of course necessary to reckon the duration of a generation at from thirty to forty years. If we now allow 31 years for a generation, the 215 years of actual residence of the Israelites in Egypt will give us seven generations, and not "four generations," as Dr. Colenso will have it. Indeed, in 1 Chron. vii., 20-27, we are told that Joshua was the tenth in descent from Joseph; so that we have here an instance of ten generations within the 215 years' bondage.



## ARTICLE X.

---

### INCREASE OF THE ISRAELITES DURING THEIR STAY IN EGYPT.

---

I shall in the next place consider Dr. Colenso's objection to the great increase of the Israelites during their stay in Egypt. In approaching this subject I feel as if I were attacking the foe in his very stronghold ; for of all the Biblical subjects which had to bear the brunt of the opponents of Scripture, there is none that has been so fiercely assailed as this one. When, half a century ago, some German writers belonging to the rationalistic school, disturbed the quiet of the religious world with their attacks upon the Bible, the subject of the increase of the Israelites in Egypt was evidently considered by them as the sharpest weapon with which to strike the most effective blow at the Scriptures ; but although the weapon was wielded by men of no ordinary talents, all the thrusts aimed at it could not inflict the least injury, but afforded only another proof of the truth of the divine declaration, that "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled"—Matt. v., 18. Dr. Colenso, therefore, in bringing forward this subject, has only followed the footsteps of the rationalistic writers of the continent of Europe, and his

arguments furnish nothing original, except that he has treated the subject somewhat differently from what they did. But let us examine his arguments. He sets out by saying, "In the first place, it must be observed, as already noted, that we no where read of any *very large families* among the children of Jacob or their descendants to the time of the Exodus. We may suppose, in order that we may have a population as large as possible, that very few died prematurely, and that those who were born almost all lived and multiplied. But we have no reason whatever, from the data furnished by the sacred books themselves, to assume that they had families materially larger than those of the present day. Thus we are told, Gen. xlv., that Reuben had four sons, Simeon six, Levi three, Judah five," &c.—Page 162. It is true, that the families of the sons of Jacob are apparently not large, but this has nothing whatever to do with the question under discussion, which is, *the great increase of the Israelites in Egypt*, and not of Jacob's sons during their sojourn in the land of Canaan. It is said of the Israelites, that they "were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them;" (Exod. 1., vii.;) but we have no such declaration as regards the sons of Jacob in the land of Canaan. Besides, their families may have been much larger than the numbers here given would indicate; many may have died in the land of Canaan, for it must be remembered that the deaths of Er and Onan are merely mentioned because they had provoked God, and he slew them. Nor can we rea-



sonably suppose that there were no other females in the family of Jacob when they went down into Egypt besides the two mentioned, namely, Dinah and Serah. Why only these two are mentioned will be explained in another article. Indeed, it is distinctly stated, Gen. xlvii., 7, that there went down with him, "his daughters and his sons' daughters;" and as Jacob had only one daughter, it is very probable that his daughters-in-law may be included in the expression, "his daughters;" but what are we to understand by "his sons' daughters?" It can certainly not mean Serah, the daughter of Asher, who is the only one mentioned.

But, exclaims Dr. Colenso, "it is certainly strange that, among all the sixty-nine children and great-grand-children of Jacob, who went down with him into Egypt, there should be only *one* daughter mentioned, and *one* grand-daughter. The very numbering of these two among the "seventy souls" shows that the females "out of the loins of Jacob," were not omitted intentionally,"—page 162. There is nothing whatever strange in the omission. The sacred writer mentions only such names as are necessary to the full comprehension of the narrative, and we may rest assured, that, whenever a female name is given exclusive of others, there existed some reason for it which was well understood then, although it may not appear quite evident to us at this distant period of time. That such was the constant practice, will be seen on comparing other genealogical lists. Among all the descendants of Esau, Gen. xxxvi., only one daughter is mentioned, verse 22. Again, among

the hundreds of sons named in 1 Chron. vi.-ix., there are only ten daughters mentioned. So among all the names and genealogies in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, only five names of females occur. Will Dr. Colenso say, that in all these cases there were no other females than those who are mentioned? Certainly not. It would be absurd to do so; and he has, therefore, no grounds for saying that the mentioning of only one daughter, and one granddaughter in the household of Jacob "is only another indication of the unhistorical character of the whole account."—Page 163.

But, continues Bishop Colenso, "The twelve sons of Jacob then, as appears from the above, had between them fifty-three sons, that is, on the average  $4\frac{1}{2}$  each. Let us suppose that they increased in this way from generation to generation. Then in the *first* generation, that of *Kohath*, there would be fifty-four males, (according to the story fifty-three, or rather only fifty-one, since Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan, Gen. xlv., 12, without issue.) In the *second*, that of Amram, 243. In the *third*, that of *Moses* and *Aaron*, 1094, and in the *fourth*, that of Joshua and Eleazar, 4923; that is to say, instead of 600,000 warriors in the prime of life there could not have been 5,000."—Page 163.

Bishop Colenso assumes here that there were only four generations, reckoning from the time when Jacob went down into Egypt, whereas we have already seen that the four generations mentioned in Gen. xv., 16, are equivalent to 400 years; he must therefore, either allow 430 years of actual bondage



instead of only 215 years, or he must reckon the four generations from Abraham, to whom the promise was made. We have only two modes of computing a generation, namely, the patriarchal, of one hundred years' duration, and the one adopted at a later period, from thirty to forty years', but according to Dr. Colenso the 215 years would give us four generations, each of fifty-three years' duration. Here we have no alternative, but must adopt the latter mode of reckoning, and if we allow thirty-one years for a generation, the 215 years of actual bondage will give us seven generations.

As we have to make our computation from the household of Jacob, who came with him into Egypt, it is necessary to ascertain the precise number of persons. In Gen. xlii., 27, it is recorded, "All the souls of the house of Jacob which came into Egypt were three score and ten."\* This number includes his 12 sons, 53 grand-sons, 1 daughter, 1 grand-daughter, 2 sons of Joseph, whom Jacob adopted, and himself. It is true that Er and Onan, sons of Judah, died in Canaan, but their place was supplied by Hezron and Hamul, two grand-sons of Judah, who were inserted in the list instead of them. From the above number we have to deduct Jacob, his daughter and grand-daughter, which leaves 67 souls. Now let us suppose that each of these and their male descendants had, on an average, four sons at the age of thirty—Benjamin had ten sons at that age—and

---

\* In the Septuagint version the number of Jacob's household is given as 75 souls, and this number is also quoted by Stephen, Acts vii., 14. It appears that in the Septuagint, the five sons of Ephraim and Manasseh (1 Chron. vii. 14-30) born in Egypt were added, which accounts for the difference in the number.

counting seven generations each of thirty-one years' duration, the total number of souls at the time of the Exodus would be as follows, namely :—\*

	67	4 gen..	17152
	4		4
1 generation.....	268	5 "	68608
	4		4
2 ".....	1072	6 "	274432
	4		4
3 ".....	4288	7 "	1097728 males.
	4		1097728 females
4 ".....	17152	Total	2195456

These figures, however, take only into account the number of children born up to the age of thirty, and we may reasonably suppose that a great many may have been born after the father had attained that age. Nor do they include any of the descendants of Jacob's servants, a circumstance which Dr. Colenso seems to have altogether passed over, but which deserves to be specially noticed here. The reader, on turning to Gen. xvii., 23, will find that Abraham,

---

\* Since the above article has appeared in the *Leader*, an esteemed friend has furnished me with the following extract from Cardinal Wiseman's "Science and Revelation."

"The production of coral reefs, and from them islands, in the South Sea, which soon received a population from distant points, shows us, in that last corner, to which she" (nature) "seems to have withdrawn her creative powers, how she had prepared new habitations for man; the incredible scale on which the inhabitants increase on such occasions, far beyond the calculations of modern statistics, proves what powerful energies she exerted when wanted to propagate the human race. An island first occupied by a few shipwrecked English, in 1589, and discovered by a Dutch vessel in 1667, is said to have been found peopled, after 80 years, by 12,000 souls, all descendants of four mothers." Vol. i., p. 228. This rate of increase is more than double that which I have assigned to the Israelites in Egypt.



according to the command of God, caused every male among the men of his household to be circumcised. At that time Abraham had only one son, Ishmael, who was then but thirteen years old, *v.* 25. Who then were the men of Abraham's house here spoken of? Surely none other than his servants; and these, by taking upon themselves the sign of the covenant, became thereby members of the covenant, and thus was added to the temporal connexion already existing between master and servant, the spiritual tie of being now with him members of the same covenant. Under the Mosaic law, all strangers who had taken upon themselves the sign of the covenant were then allowed to partake of the religious rites. See *Exod.* xii., 48, 49. Now we are told, *Gen.* xiv., 14, that Abraham had no less than "three hundred and eighteen" servants; these and their descendants would naturally become more and more attached to the families of the patriarchs. The number of servants, therefore, that must have gone down into Egypt with Jacob and his sons' families, must indeed have been very large, and it is quite probable that during their stay in Egypt they became to a great extent mixed up with the Israelites.

From the computation as above given—and it is adopted by several writers—it will be seen that each man must have had on an average four sons and four daughters at the age of thirty. This quota will, however, be greatly reduced when the servants of Jacob and their descendants are taken into account; but even leaving these altogether out of the question,

the increase of the Israelites according to the above figures involves no impossibility, particularly when we take into consideration that the sacred narrative distinctly informs us that the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them.—Exod. i., 7. It is, therefore, absurd for Dr. Colenso to say, that in order to produce “600,000 fighting men,” (which implied a population of 2,000,000) “we must suppose that each man had 46 children (23 of each sex.)”

Dr. Colenso labours hard to impress his readers with the idea that there was no unusual increase among the Hebrew families during the Egyptian bondage. He first instances the families of Jacob’s sons, who went down with him into Egypt, but evidently fearing lest it might be said that these had been born in the land of Canaan, and, therefore, do not afford a proper data upon which the increase of the Israelites in Egypt might be calculated, he, in the next place, brings forward some other families, who he says, will give a fairer average, “because these persons lived at all different times in the interval, between the migration into Egypt and the Exodus.” The families mentioned by Dr. Colenso are the following: “Zelophehad had five daughters, but no sons, Num. xxvii., 1; Amram had two sons and one daughter, Num. xxvi. 59; Moses had two sons and no daughter, Exod. xviii. 3-4; Aaron had four sons and no daughter, Exod. xxvi., 60; Izhar, Amram’s brother had three sons, Exod. vi., 21; Uzziel had three sons, Exod. vi. 22; Korah had three sons,



Exod. vi. 24; Eleazar had one son, Exod. vi. 25." The Bishop, however, admits, that "in the last four cases we cannot say whether or not there were any daughters."—Page 165. From these eight families, out of many thousands, Bishop Colenso endeavours to form an estimate of the increase of the Israelites during a period of 215 years. Now I would ask, what would be thought of the account of any statistical writer who calculated the probable increase of the population of England, say from the time of Queen Elizabeth to George III., upon a dozen families, selected from a history of England? It would absolutely be worthless.

But even some of the families which the Bishop himself has selected, may have been larger than the numbers given would indicate them to have been. Zelophehad, for instance, may have had many sons when he came out of Egypt, and who may have died in the wilderness; for it must be remembered that among those who were numbered "in the plains of Moab by Jordan, near Jericho," there was not a man who had been numbered by Moses in the wilderness of Sinai. See Num. xiv., 28, 29, 30; xxvi., 63, 64, 65. The expression, "*uvanim lo hayu lo*," rendered in the English version, "for he had no sons," may be translated, "for he has no sons," or, if rendered literally, for *there are no sons to him*, that is, he has left no sons to share in the distribution of the promised land, and therefore the five daughters came to claim their portion.—Num. xxvii., 1, 2, 3. Then, again, as to the family of Moses, Bishop Colenso should not have referred to it at all, for his

two sons were born to him in the wilderness of Sinai, neither did they nor their mother go down with him into Egypt. See Exod. xviii., 5. With respect to the other families mentioned, they may have had many daughters, for, as has already been stated, the names of females are not given, unless there is some particular reason for it.

Let it not be understood that I mean to insist that the Hebrew families must all have been equally large; by no means, I do not for a moment doubt but that the same disproportion in families existed with them as with us; all that I maintain is, that no proper estimate of the increase of the population of a country or city can be formed from a few families selected for that purpose, for we know there are various causes which often contribute to augment the population of a country.

The language employed in Exod. i., gives us distinctly to understand that there was an unusual increase, and hence Pharoah ordered to have all the Hebrew male children destroyed. This statement agrees well with the number of Israelites, as given in the sacred narrative, but what does it mean when taken in connexion with Bishop Colenso's account, simply, that the Egyptians were frightened out of their lives at "1,377" Israelites. See page 166.

Dr. Colenso, in several instances, has adopted the practice of quoting certain extravagant explanations of some commentators, as proofs of the unsoundness of their position, and, of course, to show how much more reasonable his arguments are as compared with theirs. In connexion with the subject under



consideration, he cites the opinions of Kalish, Eben Ezra, Bishop Patrick, and Rashi, better known by the name of Rabbi Solomon Jarchi. These commentators ascribe the rapid increase to fecundity among the Hebrews. The opinions of the two first mentioned writers, "that the Hebrew women may have often given birth to twins," is quite in accordance with the well established fact that such is very common in Egypt, as we learn from Aristotle, Hist. Anim. vii., 4, and Pliny, Nat. Hist. vii., 3, and from many other writers, both ancient and modern; as to the opinions of the two latter, I must agree with Dr. Colenso that they are somewhat extravagant; but the wisest man is apt to say sometimes an unreasonable thing. To meet the arguments of these commentators, Bishop Colenso says, that "Scripture implies no such fecundity among the Hebrews." In this I think he is undoubtedly wrong; the statement in the narrative, that "the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, and waxed exceedingly mighty, and the land was filled with them," appears to me as clearly *implying* fecundity as it can well do without its being declared in plain language.

The design of the sacred writer is to give merely the most essential occurrences of the historical portion of the sacred narrative, without entering into details, or assigning causes, nor is it reasonable to demand or to expect more. The Scriptures were designed to be used by the occupants of the humblest cottage, as well as by those who dwell in palaces, and if, therefore, every unimportant circumstance that transpired during the many centuries which the

sacred narrative embraces had been fully described, the Bible would have been swelled to such dimension as must have limited its use to a very great extent.

In concluding this subject, I may say, that so much has been said and written about the extraordinary increase of the Israelites in Egypt, and yet, in all probability, had it been merely a subject of secular history, no one would for a moment have questioned its veracity. In the statistical accounts of modern nations, we often meet with instances of rapid and extraordinary increase of population; and as an example, I may mention here, that in the year 1785 the population of Ireland was estimated on the basis of returns obtained from the hearth-money collectors, at a medium of six inhabitants to a house, at 2,845,932; and in 1788 Mr. Warker Bushe estimated it from the hearth-money returns, and other data, at 4,040,000. See McCulloch's Statistical Account of the British Empire, vol. i, p. 436. The table exhibiting the population of the different counties, page 437, shews also a remarkable increase in some of the counties. It will probably be said, that this rapid increase is owing to an influx of emigrants; Mr. McCulloch does certainly not assign this as one of the causes, but ascribes it chiefly to the splitting up of large estates into small portions, to early marriages, &c.

We frequently, too, hear of cases of extensive progeny. Two instances of this kind have lately been brought to our notice by some of the public journals; one is that of "Mr. Lemay Deloame, who at his death in 1849 had a posterity of 225 children and grand-children;" the other is that of "Madame Rosa-



lie Gagne Talbot, who had 17 children," and reckoned "at the time of her death an addition of 188 grand and great-grand children all alive." Instances of such rapid multiplication are apparently not confined to any particular country; on the monument of the Rev. Dr. Honeywood, Dean of Lincoln, in the Cathedral of that diocese is the following inscription:

"Here lyeth the body of Michael Honeywood, D.D.,  
Who was grand-child and one of the  
Three hundred and sixty-seven persons  
That Mary the wife of Robert Honeywood, Esq.,  
Did see before she died,  
Lawfully descended from her," &c.

On a monument at Hegdon is the following inscription:

"Here lyeth the body of  
William Strutton, of Paddington,  
Who had, by his first wife, twenty-eight children,  
And by a second, seventeen;  
Own father to forty-five,  
Grand-father to eighty-six,  
Great grand-father to ninety-seven,  
And great great grand-father to twenty-three,  
In all two hundred and fifty-one."

*Pettigrew's Chronicles of the Tombs*, pp. 215, 505, 506.

I might give other similar examples, but these will suffice; and I am sure Dr. Colenso will allow the possibility of such cases having occurred among the Hebrew families in Egypt.

From what has now been said, the reader will perceive that even this stronghold of the opponents of Scripture is by no means impregnable, and that the difficulties with which some would invest this subject after all admit of a ready explanation.

## ARTICLE XI.

---

### THE ISRAELITES ARMED.

---

This subject forms the theme of chapter IX. in Bishop Colenso's Book, and is founded on Exodus xiii., 18 : "The children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt." Upon this he remarks, "the word *chamushim*, here rendered 'harnessed,' appears to mean 'armed' or 'in battle array' in all other passages where it occurs." And a little further on he says, "It is, however, inconceivable that these down-trodden, oppressed people should have been allowed by Pharoah to possess arms, so as to turn out at a moment's notice 600,000 armed men. If such a mighty host—nearly nine times as great as the whole of Wellington's army at Waterloo, (69,686 men,) had had arms in their hands, would they not have risen long ago for their liberty, or, at all events, would there have been no danger of their rising?" Dr. Colenso was aware that the best authorities are by no means agreed upon as to the real meaning of the Hebrew word rendered "harnessed," and, therefore, before he ventured to question the veracity of the statement in the passage under consideration, he should have first set the philological difficulty at rest. It is true, that in some of the passages where the word occurs, it seems to have the



signification of "armed," or in "battle array," but any mere tyro in Hebrew philology knows, that most Hebrew words besides their primary meaning have also accessory significations, and that frequently the meaning can only be determined by the context. The translators of the English version, have evidently experienced some difficulty in translating the Hebrew word in question in the passage before us, they have rendered it "harnessed"—in the margin, however, they have given it the meaning of "by five in a rank." In Josh i., 14, it is translated "armed"—in the margin, "marshalled by five." In the ancient versions the word is likewise differently rendered, and both ancient and modern commentators differ greatly in their views in regard to its meaning. Now, in my opinion, of all the various significations that have been attached to it, there are only three which are deserving of notice; and these I shall now consider, together with their bearing upon the passage.

From other passages where the word occurs, as Josh. i., 14, iv., 2, Judg. vii., 11, it appears that it may denote *armed*. Now supposing this is the meaning of it in the passage before us, must we necessarily infer from it that all the children of Israel who went up from Egypt were armed? If we hear of a country arming, do we understand by it that every man from eighteen to twenty years old and upwards is shouldering the musket? Or if we read of the French invading a country, does it imply that every man in France capable of bearing arms takes part in the invasion? Or again, if it is said that the citizens of

Toronto had a public meeting in the City Hall, does it mean that every inhabitant had been present? If then such *general expressions* are constantly used with us in a *limited sense*, why should not the sacred writer be permitted to use similar phrases in a *restricted sense*? Indeed the Scriptures abound in expressions of this kind ; thus, in Job i., 15, it is said, “ And the Sabeans fell upon them,” (*i. e.*, upon the oxen and asses,) “ and took them away ; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword.” Here can only be meant some of the Sabeans, who were a powerful people dwelling in Arabia Felix.

I readily agree with Dr. Colenso, that it is not very probable that the Hebrews possessed enough arms so as to turn out 600,000 armed men, or else they would surely have made some attempt to free themselves from their bondage, neither would they have evinced such fear when pursued by the Egyptians. But we may reasonably suppose that they had gathered up a large number of arms during their stay in Egypt to equip a considerable number of men, and in that case the Israelites might still be said to have gone up “ armed.” The Israelites had had sufficient warning to make all the necessary preparations for their journey. When one plague followed another of a more terrific nature, however incredulous some may at first have been, they must soon have become convinced that the mighty Jehovah was working out their deliverance. Moses during this time, would, no doubt, instruct the people, through the elders, what provisions they were to make for their journey, and the people would only



be too glad to follow his instructions. Although their stock of arms on leaving Egypt may not have been very large, it was no doubt greatly augmented after the Egyptians had perished in the Red Sea. Josephus, indeed, tells us, that on the next day Moses gathered together the weapons of the Egyptians, Ant. ii., 16, 6 ; and it is quite reasonable to suppose, that when the Israelites saw the Egyptians lying dead on the seashore, they would appropriate to themselves such armour as they stood most in need of; a practice which is quite common in modern warfare, although historians do not always think it worth their while to record it. At the time, then, when the Israelites fought the Amalekites they were no doubt amply provided with all kinds of arms.

Again, the Hebrew word *chamushim* may also denote "*in battle array*," but then, if this is the sense here, it can only mean that the Hebrews went up, *as if it were*, in battle array, or, in other words, in perfect order. Even regular armies do not go in battle array when on their march, unless when they are about to go into action, and why should the Israelites march out of Egypt in that manner, when they had not the remotest idea of encountering an enemy? The rendering *as if it were* in battle array is quite admissible, for the phrase "*as it were*" must frequently be supplied in Scripture, as, for example, Gen. xi., 4, "And they said come, let us build for us a city, and a tower, and whose top is unto heaven," *i. e.*, *as if it were reaching* unto heaven, meaning exceedingly high, and not, as some have absurdly supposed, that they were building the tower in order to scale the heavens.

We have already seen what perfect order pervaded the wandering of the Israelites through the wilderness, and it is therefore quite possible that the phrase, *as if it were* "in battle array," may convey to us here the idea of going out of Egypt in regular order, and not in a confused manner.

The term *chamushim* admits yet of another rendering, if we change the vowel points and read *chamishshim*, it denotes *by fifty*, and may mean that they went up by fifty in a company—of which number of soldiers a company generally consisted in the army of the Hebrews—hence we frequently meet with the phrase, captain of fifty.—See 2 Kings i., 9 ; Isa. iii., 3. It is but right to inform the reader who may not have a knowledge of the Hebrew language, that the vowels in Hebrew are expressed by points and strokes—a similar system exists in other oriental languages—which were however introduced only some centuries after the Christian era, when the language began to fall into disuse. Now, although these vowel points are of the greatest importance, having been introduced by learned rabbies, well skilled in the language, when the Hebrew was yet spoken, and as handing down to us the correct pronunciation, yet they have no pretensions to divine origin equal with the sacred text ; and, therefore, when we find that a mere change of vowels in a word would afford a more suitable sense, we have not the same scruple in changing the vowels as we would have in altering a single consonant. It sometimes so happens, though not very often, that the context does not assist in determining the proper significa-



tion, in that case we may naturally expect that commentators and critics will differ in their opinions. A striking example of this kind is afforded in Gen. xlvii., 31, "and Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head." In the Septuagint version it is rendered "upon the top of his staff," which rendering is also adopted by St. Paul, Heb. xi., 21. The difference in the translation arises from the English version having followed the Hebrew pointing *mittah*, "bed," whilst the Septuagint version, which was made long before the vowel points were introduced, read the word *matteh*, "staff." I think the latter reading decidedly the most preferable of the two, as agreeing best with the context.

If, therefore, any of the readers think that the rendering of the Hebrew word "by fifty" in the passage under consideration affords the best sense, he has a perfect right to adopt it, as it merely involves a change of vowel points.

From what has now been said, it appears, then, that the word *chamushim* may be rendered either "armed" or in "battle array," or by changing the vowels, "by fifty," any one of these three significations agrees well with the context, and neither of them involves the least inconsistency; though for my part I would give the preference to the rendering, "*as if it were* in battle array," and take it to mean that the Israelites went up from Egypt in perfect order, joyfully and triumphantly, they having been delivered in a glorious manner from their long servitude.

## ARTICLE XII.

---

### THE MARCH OUT OF EGYPT.

---

“And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them, and flocks and herds, even very much cattle.”—Exod. xii., 37, 38.

Upon this Dr. Colenso remarks: “It appears from Num. i., 3, ii., 32, that these six hundred thousand were the men in the prime of life, from twenty years old and upward; all that were able to go forth to war in Israel. And (as we have seen) this large number of able-bodied warriors implies a total population of at least two millions. Here, then, we have this vast body of people of all ages summoned to start, according to the story, at a moment’s notice, and actually started, not one being left behind, together with all their multitudinous flocks and herds, which must have been spread out over a district as large as a good-sized English county?” Chapter xi., page 113.

I have, in a former article, clearly shown that the Israelites, according to the sacred narrative, had sufficient notice to make all necessary preparations. The language of the sacred writer is so distinct upon this subject, that it is somewhat surprising how, in



the face of such direct declarations, any one can presume to assert that the people were "summoned to start, according to the story, at a moment's notice." Even if the narrative had been altogether silent on this point, we might naturally infer that the people would begin to prepare for their journey from the time that Moses brought them the joyful news that the Lord would soon deliver them from their servitude. The Bishop, in order to shew the Mosaic account of the departure of the Israelites "to be utterly incredible and impossible," gives, as an example, a little incident which happened to his own family. He says, "remembering, as I do, the confusion in my own small household of thirty or forty persons, when once we were obliged to fly from our beds with a false alarm, that an invading Zulu force had entered the colony, had evaded the English troops sent to meet them, and was making its way direct for our station, killing right and left as they came along"—pp. 113, 114. This is rather an unhappy simile. We can easily understand that the Bishop's family should, under such *unforeseen circumstances*, be thrown into confusion, but in the Hebrew families there was order, perfect order, which was a distinctive characteristic of the ancient Jews. They were not invaded by a Zulu or any other force, nor had they to rise from their beds and fly for their lives, but were composedly eating the passover, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staffs in their hands, ready to start as soon as the command was given, and when they did depart, it was not in haste to save their *own* lives, but the

Egyptians urged them to leave, for fear lest their tarrying might involve them in the same destruction with the first-born in the land.

The great secret in moving large armies with comparative ease, is no doubt the strict order and discipline which generally pervades these movements; many, almost insurmountable difficulties, are thus often overcome, which, in all probability, would have checked the advance of a much smaller body of men whose movements are not conducted in as orderly a manner. Herodotus informs us that the army of Xerxes, when numbered at Deriskus, amounted to 1,700,000 fighting men, composed of different nations, besides women and domestics; now, though this number is no doubt greatly exaggerated, still it is admitted to have been the largest army that ever took the field, and yet it does not appear that this immense assemblage of persons experienced any difficulties in its movements, on account of its number. The ancient Hebrews, as we have said, were habitually an orderly people, and patient under hardships, and this would enable them to overcome obstacles, to which others would probably have had to succumb. Moses, too, though the early years of his life were spent in luxury and ease in the palace of Pharaoh, being destined to become, under Providence, the deliverer of his nation from bondage, was to be prepared for the responsible office, and soon an incident occurred which obliged him to fly from Egypt, and seek an asylum in the wilderness of Arabia, where he passed some years in tending the flocks of his father-in-law, and thus he became fami-



liar with the localities and resources of the place to which he was afterwards to lead the Israelites. The knowledge which he had thus obtained must have largely contributed to facilitate the movements of such a large concourse of people, as it would enable him to anticipate any difficulties and obstacles that might come in their way on their journey, by making the necessary preparations to meet them.

But, continues Dr. Colenso, "And now let us see them on the march itself. If we imagine the people to have travelled through the open desert, in a wide body, fifty men abreast, as some suppose to have been the practice in the Hebrew armies, then, allowing an interval of a yard between each rank, the able-bodied warriors alone would have filled up the road for about seven miles, and the whole multitude would have formed a dense column more than twenty-two miles long—so that the last of the body could not have started till the front had advanced that distance, more than two days' journey for such a mixed company as this." Page 116. We do not pretend to dispute that the moving of so large an assemblage required a good deal of generalship; nay, we will even admit that there may have been many cases of individual hardships; but, at the same time, we have good reason to believe that Moses, who proved himself afterwards such an able leader, would make all the necessary arrangements to meet as much as possible the exigencies of the case. Dr. Colenso takes it for granted, that the Hebrews formed one continual line, and then, even "in a wide body, fifty men abreast," it would form "a dense column

more than twenty-two miles long." But who would ever dream of marching two millions of people in a "dense column?" In moving large bodies of men, for convenience sake they are divided into divisions, who move at considerable distances one from another, and this was no doubt the plan adopted when the Israelites set out on their journey. Moses, who was well aware of the route they were to take, would make such disposition of those who met at the place of rendezvous, as was best calculated to facilitate their march. It is impossible to speak with any certainty on this subject, for the sacred narrative only tells us, "And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth;" but we may still conjecture what the probable plan may have been which was adopted under the circumstances. Rameses, as has already been stated, was situated—as is now generally admitted—in the middle part of the valley of the ancient canal, near the water-shed, between the Bitter Lakes and the valley of the Seven Springs, not far from Heroöpolis, and was, therefore, about thirty miles distant from the head of the Gulf of Suez, (see Dr. Robinson's *Bibl. Researches*, vol. i., p. 79; Hengstenberg *die Bücher Mose*, p. 48,) a distance which the Israelites could easily perform in three days. As Moses and Aaron, together with a great number of Hebrews, probably resided in this city, they may be said to have set out from that place, just as we speak of an army removing from a place where merely the head-quarters had been established. Those who had resided in other parts of the land of Goshen, and had only come to Rameses as the place



of rendezvous, very likely encamped along the route they were to take, so that a large body of them would have been well in advance when the final movement began. Nor need we assume, with Dr. Colenso, that they all pursued one line of march, but the twelve tribes may have moved in three or four columns, each keeping a convenient distance one from the other, an order which they would maintain likewise when they halted. There was no want of room, and therefore not the least necessity for marching in "a dense column."

Whether this was the plan of march or one somewhat similar, it is impossible to say; this much however is certain, that there was not the least difficulty in making such a disposition of the twelve tribes with their herds and flocks, as to prevent any one interfering with the other; and we may rest assured that Moses and Aaron, with the assistance of the elders, would do every thing in their power to render the journey as little irksome as possible. We are frequently apt to look upon a thing as utterly impracticable, because we do not exactly comprehend how it could be successfully accomplished, but as soon as we hear that it has been performed, and how it was done, we are astonished at ourselves, and wonder how we could have so overrated the difficulties. In the pages of secular history, too, we have many almost incredible exploits recorded as having been performed under peculiar circumstances, and which are received and believed as undoubted facts, though it is not always clearly seen how they were accomplished. And why, I would ask, should there

be evinced such incredulity as to events recorded in sacred history? When we extend a liberal criticism to subjects in secular history, is it just, is it reasonable, to apply the iron rule to subjects in sacred history, and say—as Dr. Colenso and some other writers have done—tell us precisely the manner in which the two millions of Israelites marched out of Egypt upwards of three thousand years ago, or we must declare the narrative to be mere fiction? I say such a demand is arbitrary, and capricious in the extreme. But, asks Dr. Colenso, “and what of the sick and infirm, &c., in a population like that of London?” I have already said that there may possibly have been many cases of hardship and suffering during the journey, such might naturally be expected among so large a number of people; but we may rest assured that ample provision was made to meet, as much as possible, the wants of such cases. It is, however, absurd to draw a comparison with London. The Hebrews were a cleanly and temperate people, their food was of the simplest kind, consisting chiefly of vegetables, lentils especially were greatly esteemed among them, and are even to this day greatly used by the orientals: the climate of Egypt is equable and healthy; under these circumstances we can readily imagine that sickness was not very prevalent among them. How different is the case with the inhabitants of London—there want and excessive wretchedness among the poor, and the sumptuous living among the opulent, besides many other causes, contribute to engender disease.

Dr. Colenso perceives yet another difficulty. He



asks once more, "What then did those two millions of sheep and oxen live upon during this journey from Rameses to Succoth, and from Succoth to Etham, and from Etham to the Red Sea?" The reader will remember that in a former article, I have considerably reduced the number of sheep which Dr. Colenso ascribes to the Israelites, it is therefore not necessary to offer any further remarks upon this subject; I shall merely add, that the direct route of the Israelites from Rameses to the Red Sea was along the valley of the ancient canal—this valley and the immediate neighbourhood possessing great facilities for irrigation, no doubt enjoyed a high state of cultivation, for, as Dr. Robinson says, "wherever water is, there is fertility."

We have said that the distance from Rameses to the Red sea was about thirty miles, and the sacred narrative informs us that the first day's march brought the Israelites to Succoth; the name denotes *booths*, or huts, and probably was an encamping place, from whence it received its name. The next place where they halted was at Etham, (Egyptian *itiom*, *i. e.*, a boundary of the sea.) Here they were commanded to turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth; the name, if of Hebrew origin, denotes, *the mouth of the caves*, but if it is Egyptian, *pi-achi-roth*, it means, *a place where sedge grows*. It is not necessary for us to assume that this journey was performed in three consecutive days, on the contrary, it is very likely that they rested at each of these places. See Num. xxxiii., 5, 6, 7.

The direct route from Etham to Sinai was round

the head of the Gulph of Suez, and along the eastern side of it, but instead of being permitted to take the shortest course, they were commanded to turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, which led them down on the western side of the gulf, altogether out of their course. The reason for this digression from the regular route is given in Exodus xiv., 3, 4: "For Pharoah will say of the children of Israel, they are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. And I will harden Pharoah's heart that he shall follow after them," &c. Now according to Raumer and Sicard, two celebrated eastern travellers, Pi-hahiroth was situated in the large plain, Beideah, between Mount Attaka and the Red Sea, having a very narrow entrance, so that Pharoah might well say, "they are entangled in the land." See also Josephus, Ant. ii., 15. How beautifully do modern researches agree with the Mosaic narrative.

Dr. Colenso frequently gives the explanations of Dr. Kurtz on certain passages to shew the feebleness of his arguments. I am not much acquainted with the writings of this author, the only work of his in my possession is his "Manual of Sacred History," a work which is useful, and shows the author to be orthodox in his views, but from the extracts which Dr. Colenso gives in his book, it appears to me that Kurtz, in many instances, creates difficulties merely to have the satisfaction of answering them, and in which, I must confess, he is not always very successful or satisfactory.



### ARTICLE XIII.

---

#### THE ISRAELITES DWELLING IN TENTS.

---

“Take ye every man manna for them which are in his tents.”—Exod. xvi., 16.

Upon this passage Dr. Colenso remarks, “Here we find that, immediately after their coming out of Egypt, the people were provided with *tents*—cumbersome articles to have been carried, when they fled in haste, ‘taking their dough before it was leavened, their kneading-troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders.’ Exod. xii., 34. It is true, this statement conflicts strangely with that in Lev. xxiii., 42, 43, where it is assigned as a reason for their ‘dwelling in booths’ for seven days at the Feast of Tabernacles, ‘that your generation may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in *booths*, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt.’ It cannot be said that the word “*booths*” here means “tents,” because the Hebrew word for a *booth*, made of boughs and bushes, *succah*, which is the word here used, is quite different from that for a tent, *ohel*, used in Exod. xvi., 16. And a little further on he says, “Now, allowing *ten* persons for each tent, (and decency would surely require that there should not be more than this—a Zulu hut in Natal contains on an average only *three and a-half*,) two millions of people would require 200,000 tents. How then did they acquire these?”—pp. 94, 95.

Tents, from their first invention, have always been associated with the pastoral life, as affording a habitation which could easily be removed from place to place. In Gen. iv., 20, we are told that "Jabal was the father (*i. e.*, the founder) of such as dwell in tents, and of *such as have* cattle." The patriarchs and their descendants lived in tents, and the Hebrews who, no doubt, possessed large numbers of herds and flocks during their stay in Egypt, and thus kept up to a great extent a nomadic life, constantly made use of them whilst tending their flocks. The flocks were often kept by females, (see Gen. xxix., 9, Exod. ii., 16,) a practice still existing among the Bedawin Arabs; among some tribes, indeed, to such an extent that, as Burckhardt informs us, "a boy would feel himself insulted were any one to say, 'go and drive your father's sheep to pasture;' these words, in his opinion, would signify, you are no better than a girl." Whilst the able-bodied Hebrews, therefore, were obliged to do all kinds of hard labour for the Egyptians, those who were not able to work, as well as the unmarried females, would attend to the flocks; so that they must at all times have possessed a large number of tents. If, however, any of the families had stood in want of them, what should have prevented their supplying themselves with them as best they could. They were aware their deliverance was drawing nigh, and the period that elapsed between the first and the last plague afforded them ample time to make the necessary provisions for the journey. Nor can I agree with Dr. Colenso, when he asserts that



the Israelites could not have lived in tents in Egypt, because they were commanded to "take the blood" (of the paschal lamb) "and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the house wherein ye shall eat it." This command could be observed by those who dwelt in tents as well as by those who inhabited houses, for the "blood" might be put on the side posts, and on the upper part of the entrance of the tent, which would have answered all purposes. The Hebrew word *petach* denotes simply an entrance, whether of a house or a tent, &c. I think it is not at all unlikely that many who did not reside in towns, may have lived in tents.

If, however, on their leaving Egypt there was at first a deficiency of tents, and some families had to experience a little inconvenience on account of it, they could soon remedy the evil during their journeying in the wilderness. In a delightful climate, like that of Egypt and of Western Asia, the want of tents would not be greatly felt during the summer season; shelter from the sun is all that is required, and that could readily be found under trees, which were, no doubt, plentiful in those days. Even to the present day, many of the Bedawins have no other shelter during the summer season.

Dr. Colenso says, "If we allow ten persons to each tent, two millions of people would require 200,000 tents." It would be vain to attempt to give the number of occupants of each tent, that, of course, would altogether depend on the size of the families, and whether there actually was a want of tents, in which case there may at first have been some crowd-

ing until the number was increased. Judging from the tents now generally in use, a good family tent averages from 25 to 30 feet in length, and is about 10 feet in breadth, though they are very often larger. The interior is divided into more or less compartments by curtains, which are sometimes embroidered with flowers. So that Dr. Colenso need not be shocked if, perchance, there were more than ten persons living in a tent. At first the tents were, no doubt, covered with skins, which afterwards gave place to coverings made of goats' hair, spun and woven by the women, to which allusion is made in Exod. xxxv., 26, xxxvi., 14. The Arabs at the present day generally make use of this material for covering their tents. When a number of tents are pitched closely together they present an imposing appearance, particularly to the approaching traveller. This will explain the expression in Cant. i., 5, "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar." Tents afford a delightful abode in the east, and many residents of towns continue to live in them during the summer months. Those who are accustomed to live in tents would hardly exchange them for the finest houses, so that the Israelites did not suffer any hardship in this respect.

But Dr. Colenso sees yet another difficulty; he asks: "But, further, if they had had these tents, how could they have carried them? They could not have borne them on their shoulders, since these were already occupied with other burdens." Page 96. Indeed, he draws a pitiful and dismal picture of the burdens which these Israelites had to carry; there



were the "kneading-troughs, with the dough unleavened;" there were besides "all the other necessities for daily domestic use, for sleeping, cooking, &c." Then, "there were the infants and children, who could scarcely have gone on foot twenty miles, as the story requires;" (certainly not, considering they had only about ten miles to go a day,) "there were the aged and infirm persons, who must have likewise needed assistance," &c. But it is somewhat surprising, that whilst Bishop Colenso should have thought of all these things, he should have entirely forgotten that the Israelites did not set out from the uncivilised wilds of Africa, but from a country where they were already acquainted with agriculture, and all those arts of civilisation which indicate a social existence; where they could obtain carts or waggons, if they did not already possess them. Of oxen, which were generally employed to draw waggons, they had no doubt great numbers, and if they required more beasts of burden, they might also employ camels for that purpose. Carts or waggons were in common use in Egypt, in the time of Joseph, as we learn from Gen. xlv., 19, 27; and that the Israelites brought some with them out of Egypt is quite evident, for in Num. vii., 3, it is said that the princes of the tribes brought six covered waggons and twelve oxen as an offering before the tabernacle; this occurred while they encamped at Sinai. It is not at all improbable that the Egyptians even made the Israelites presents of waggons, since they were so "urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste." A waggon drawn by a

yoke of oxen would take a great many tents. We cannot therefore see the least difficulty in the Israelites finding sufficient means to carry their "tents" and "all other necessaries for daily domestic use," which in those days were few and simple.

Dr. Colenso takes umbrage at the word "tents" being used in Exod. xvi., 16, whilst in Lev. xxiii., 42, the word "booths" is employed. Now I do not see in what way the "statement" in the former passage "conflicts strangely" with what is said in the latter, simply because there are two different terms used. The words in both places are correctly employed. The Israelites during their journeying in the wilderness lived in tents, and accordingly they were commanded Exod. xvi., 16, "to gather manna only according to the number of the occupants in each tent. In Lev. xxiii., 42, 43, the case is quite different, there the Feast of Tabernacles was instituted in commemoration of their having dwelled in tents, and as this feast was to be observed by all Jews wherever they might dwell and under all circumstances, therefore the sacred writer employed the word *succoth*, which denotes "booths" and "tents," indicating thereby that either might be used as most convenient, and as the erection of a booth with boughs does not involve any expense, even the poorest would not be debarred from celebrating the feast. The word *succoth*, in verse 43, should have been translated "tents," and it would then have read, "That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in tents, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt."



Dr. Colenso admits that the word *succoth* is "in 2 Sam. xi., 11, and one or two other places," used in the sense of "tents," but he says it is used "improperly," page 95. This is the greatest piece of presumption that I have ever met with in any critical work. It is simply affirming that the sacred writer did not know his own language. We shall immediately be told that Job, Solomon, and Isaiah did not know Hebrew, because the former makes use of the expression *butte chomar*—literally, house of clay—to denote the human body, Job. iv., 19; and the two latter employ the word *bayith*—a house—in the sense of a grave, Isaiah xiv., 18, Eccl. xii., 5; and also that David, Jeremiah and other prophets employed the Hebrew word *bath*—daughter—"improperly," when they made use of such expressions as daughter of Zion, daughter of Tyre, daughter of Egypt, to express *the inhabitants* of those countries. If Bishop Colenso is going to restrict Hebrew words to *one* signification, then all I can say is, that he is ushering in a revolution in Hebrew philology, which would only find its parallel in the revolution he is endeavouring to create in the religious world by his new mode of interpreting the Scriptures.

Had the Bishop employed the usual means of obtaining the correct meaning of a derivative word, by tracing the noun *succah* to its root, he would have found that it is derived from the verb *sachach*, to cover, as with boughs or cloth, &c., and hence may denote either a booth, hut, or tent. But Dr. Colenso goes on to say, "And besides, in the context in the passage in Leviticus, we have a description of the way in which these booths were to be

made, 'Ye shall take you the boughs of goodly trees, branches of the palm tree, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook,' *v.* 40. This seems to fix the meaning of the Hebrew word in this particular passage, and to show that it is used in its proper sense of 'booths'—pp. 94, 95.

In this supposition Bishop Colenso is entirely wrong; for verse 40 does not refer to the covering of the "booths" mentioned in verses 42, 43, but refers altogether to a different ceremony, which was to be observed at the Feast of Tabernacles. He has fallen into this error by following the English version, which does not afford a correct rendering of the original. It should have been translated, "And ye shall take to yourselves on the first day the fruit of a beautiful tree, branches of the palm tree, and a branch of the myrtle tree, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days."

I cannot understand why the translators of the English version should have rendered here *peri ets hadar*, by boughs of goodly trees, instead of "the fruit of a beautiful tree;" the latter meaning is, however, given in the margin. In the Vulgate it is translated "*fructus arboris pulcherrimæ*;" in the French version, "*du fruit d'un bel arbre*;" and in the German version, "*Früchte von schönen Bäumen*." The best Jewish writers understand by "the fruit," the citron. The Hebrew words *anaph ets avoth*, which I have rendered, "a branch of the myrtle tree," properly means, "a branch of a tree with thick foliage," but it is generally allowed that *avoth* is a species of myrtle having thick foliage.



The Feast of Tabernacles was instituted not only in commemoration of the journey through the wilderness, but was also designed as a festival of thanksgiving for the bountiful supply of the rich fruit of the earth, and hence it was likewise called *chag haasaph*, *i. e.*, “the feast of ingathering,”—Exodus xxiii., 16. And as it was a season of the greatest festivity and rejoicing, the Talmudists, by way of distinction, have designated it also *hachag*, *i. e.*, “the feast.” During the religious services, the Jews carried in one hand the fruit of a beautiful tree, (perhaps a citron,) and in the other the branch of the palm tree, a branch of myrtle, and a few branches of willows, and it is to this service that verse 40 has reference. Josephus speaks of this rite as follows :—“We should then carry in our hands a branch of myrtle, and willow, and the bough of the palm tree, with the addition of the pome-citron.” Ant. iii., 10, 4.

In the writings of the ancient rabbies, the ceremony is likewise described. They say, “Those who took part in the festival carried in the left hand a citron, in the right hand a bunch of branches, viz., one branch of palm-tree, and two branches of willow, and a branch of myrtle, they passed round an altar and repeated with a loud voice in a solemn manner, “*hoshia nah*, Hosanna.” This ceremony is still observed at the present day wherever the Jews celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles in a proper manner. Is it not strange that Bishop Colenso should have been ignorant of the existence of such a service?

## ARTICLE XIV.

### THE SIZE OF THE COURT OF THE TABERNACLE, COMPARED WITH THE NUMBER OF THE CONGREGATION.

“And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying . . . Gather thou the congregation unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Moses did as Jehovah commanded him. And the assembly was gathered unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.”—Lev. viii., 1-4. Here Dr. Colenso remarks :

“It appears to be certain that by the expressions used so often, here and elsewhere, ‘the assembly,’ ‘the whole assembly,’ ‘all the congregation,’ is meant the whole body of the people—at all events, the adult males in the prime of life, among them—and not merely the elders or heads of the people, as some have supposed, in order to escape from such difficulties as that which we are now about to consider”—p. 67.

He then quotes a number of passages to shew that all the people must be meant by such expressions as “the whole assembly,” “all the congregation;” but he is inclined not to be too severe in his criticism, and to “confine” his “attention for the present to the 603,550 warriors, (Num. ii., 22,) who certainly must have formed a part of ‘the whole congregation,’ leaving out of consideration the multitude of old men, women, and children.” But now we come to the difficulty, “the whole width of the tabernacle,” he says, was only “10 cubits, or 18 feet, and its length was 30 cubits, or 34 feet, as may be gathered from Exod. xxvi. Allowing two feet in width for each full-grown man, nine men could just have stood in front of it.” But think, reader, supposing all the congregation of the adult males had assembled, and had taken their stand,



“Side by side, as closely as possible, in front, not merely at the door, but at the whole end of the tabernacle in which the door was, they would have reached, allowing 18 inches between each rank of nine men, for a distance more than 100,000 feet, in fact, nearly twenty miles.” Page 79. Then as to the court, “when thronged,” observes Dr. Colenso, it “could only have held 5,000 people; whereas, the able-bodied men exceeded 600,000. Even the ministering Levites, ‘from thirty to fifty years old,’ were 8,580 in number, (Num. iv., 48,) only 504 of these could have stood within the court in front of the tabernacle, and not two-thirds of them could have entered the court, if they had filled it from one end to the other.” Page 80.

The children of Israel were here commanded to assemble at the tabernacle to witness the consecration of Aaron and his sons. As this was the first ceremony of the kind ever performed, and withal an exceedingly solemn one, I doubt not that all who could possibly attend, whether men or women, old or young, joyfully obeyed the summons. I cannot, therefore, accept Dr. Colenso’s liberal offer to limit the assemblage to the able bodied men only. But it will be asked, where can you find any thing like sufficient room for so vast a number of people within the court in front of the tabernacle? There can be but one answer given to this question, and that is, the sacred narrative neither says nor implies that the people were to assemble inside the court, and if the Bishop finds any difficulty in the above passage, it is not the fault of the inspired writer, but his own, in not having sufficiently considered the language of the sacred text. It is not said here, that the people were to assemble (*bachatsar hammi-shkan*) *i.e.*, *within the court of the tabernacle*, which

expression the sacred writer would, no doubt have employed, had the divine command been for the people to assemble there, but it is said, (*el petach ohel moed*), "at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." There is just as much difference in these two phraseologies as there would be in the citizens of a large town being ordered for a certain purpose to assemble, both old and young, *in a room of a certain building*, or to assemble *at the door of that building*, where there would be plenty of room for all.

The term (*ohel moed*) literally means *the tent of meeting*, and was so called, because the assemblies of the people were held before it; it was there where it pleased Jehovah to meet with the children of Israel.

"This *shall be* a continual burnt offering throughout your generations *at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord*: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and *the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory*."—Exod. xxix., 42, 43. But let us compare now, Exod. xxv., 21, 22, "And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims, which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." The divine commands were delivered from the mercy seat, which was in the Holy of Holies, where none but the High Priest was permitted to enter, and he again communicated them to the people. It is, therefore, plain that



wherever God met the people by displaying His glory, they were assembled outside, and not *within* the tabernacle, whilst the divine communications were delivered to the High Priest from the mercy-seat only. Hence we find it distinctly stated (Exod. xl., 29,) that “the altar of burnt offering” was placed “by the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation;” and again in Lev. xvii., 4, that all the people had to bring the beasts that they killed, “unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation to offer an offering unto the Lord.” Thus it will be seen that even when they brought an offering, they did not bring it *within* the tabernacle, but only to *the door, or entrance of it*.

The reader will better understand what has just been said, by picturing to himself an enclosed place with an entrance, and another enclosed place of smaller dimensions within this one. The inner enclosure would represent the tabernacle, which was divided into “the holy place” and “the most holy” by a vail. See Exod. xxvi., 31–34. The space between the inner and outer enclosure formed the “court of the tabernacle.” Now it was before the entrance of this outer enclosure that the people assembled, and hence was called the “tabernacle of the congregation,” or “meeting.” Dr. Colenso has evidently not studied the construction of the tabernacle, and hence has fallen into error by supposing the people were commanded to assemble “within the court” before the door of the tabernacle. But Dr. Colenso lays likewise great stress upon the words, “unto the door of the tabernacle,” as if the people had been commanded to come up close to the door ;

but the reader knows well what is meant by such an expression, simply as many as could come up to it, whilst those who could not come within a mile or more of the door, would nevertheless form as much a part of the assembly as those who were near it. But further, with all due respect to the Bishop, I must say, that he has apparently not enquired sufficiently into the origin of the meanings of Hebrew words. Now it is evident that before you can come up to a place, it is necessary that we first go towards it, and hence the primary meaning of the Hebrew preposition *el*, is, "towards," that is, in the direction *towards* a place or person, whilst only in a secondary sense it denotes *to* or *unto*, or *at*. As, for instance, Isaiah xxxviii., 2, "Then Hezekiah turned his face (*el*) towards the wall." And again, Eccles. i., 6, "The wind goeth (*el*) towards the south." And I see no reason why it should not be so rendered in the passage before us; "and the assembly was gathered (*el*) towards the door of the tabernacle." I maintain, then, that the people were not required to assemble "within the court of the tabernacle," but before it, where there was ample room, and where even those that were furthest from the door could see when "the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people." See Lev. ix., 23.

In short, if the view which Dr. Colenso takes of the subject were the correct one, it would involve such a great absurdity, that one can hardly conceive that the writer, whoever he might have been, expected to pass it off as a fact, unless, indeed, he looked upon all his readers as a set of idiots.



## ARTICLE XV.

---

### THE NUMBER OF FIRST BORN COMPARED WITH THE NUMBER OF MALE ADULTS.

---

“All the first-born males, from a month old and upwards, of those that were numbered, were twenty and two thousand two hundred and three score and thirteen.—Num. iii., 43.”

Upon this passage Dr. Colenso remarks—p. 141 :  
“Let us see what this statement implies when treated as a simple matter of fact For this purpose I quote the words of Kurtz, iii., p, 209 :”

“If there were 600,000 males twenty years and upwards, the whole number of males may be reckoned at 900,000, (he elsewhere reckons them 1,000,000,) in which case there would be only *one* first-born to *forty-two* (forty-four) males. In other words, the number of boys in every family must have been on the average forty-two.”

Dr. Colenso so constantly quotes from Kurtz that we would almost imagine him to be the authorised interpreter of the Bible, expressing both the opinions of Christians and Jews. I cannot, for my part, see in what way the opinions of Kurtz will in the least assist to establish Dr. Colenso's views. If Kurtz's arguments do not appear satisfactory to the Bishop, it does not follow that no better arguments have been or can be advanced. Kurtz, like other interpreters, may in many instances have been very happy in

some arguments, whilst in others, again, he may have entirely failed. But I am to shew that there is no discrepancy in the small number of first-born; and that there is really no necessity for assuming "the number of boys in every family to have been on the average forty-two."

There are various causes which may have contributed to give so small a number of first-born at the first numbering. In the first place I remark, that many first-born must have been killed when Pharaoh ordered the first-born to be slain, when we know what a providential escape Moses had from losing his life when an infant. Secondly, many of the first-born, no doubt, had died before the first numbering took place. Dr. Colenso admits, p. 144, that such may have been the case, though he says it would only slightly diminish the difficulty. Whether it would slightly or greatly diminish the difficulty depends altogether on the number of first-born that were killed when Pharaoh ordered them to be slain, and on the number that had died before the numbering. Thirdly, it is well known that mothers frequently lose their first child in child-birth, and yet very often have large families; in all such cases the sons born afterwards would go to swell *the total number of males*, but there would be no first-born *males* to swell *the number of first-born*. Fourthly, a man might have many wives, and children by each of them, but he could only have one first-born. This has been very properly maintained by J. D. Michaelis and many other commentators. There cannot be a shadow of doubt, that wherever the term *first-born*



in Scripture refers to human offspring, it always means first-born on the father's as well as on the mother's side. Kurtz and Dr. Colenso, however, maintain that it means only on the mother's side. Happily we are not left to mere conjecture in this respect, for there are several instances which clearly shew in what sense the term "first-born" is used in Scripture. Jacob, for example, had two wives and two concubine-wives; the first child of each of these was a son; according to Dr. Colenso and Kurtz, Jacob must have had four first-born; but the patriarch himself declares, Gen. xlix., 3, "Reuben, thou art my first-born." In Num. i., 20, we read again, "And the children of Reuben, the first-born of Israel," rendered in the English version, "Israel's eldest son." Gideon, the fifth judge of Israel, had seventy sons by many wives, (Judg. viii., 30,) but he had only one first-born. In verse 20 we read, "And he said unto Jether, his first-born, up, and slay them." David, too, had many wives and many sons; in 2 Sam. iii., 2-5, it is recorded that he had six sons by six different mothers in Hebron, but in verse 2 it is distinctly mentioned that "his first-born was Amnon." After he came to Jerusalem he took more wives besides concubines, who bore him sons and daughters. See ch. v., 13-16, 1 Chron. iii., 5-9. In Deut. xxi., 15-17, there is a law laid down which declares :

"If a man hath two wives, one beloved and another hated; and they have borne him children; (Hebrew, *banim*, sons,) both the beloved and the hated; and if the first-born son be hers that was hated: then it shall be when he maketh

his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved first-born before the son of the hated, *which is indeed* the first-born : but he shall acknowledge the son of the hated *for* the first-born by giving him a double portion of all that he hath : for he is the beginning of his strength ; the right of the first-born is his."

This law clearly shews that the Scriptures recognise only one first-born in a family.

Dr. Colenso asks,

"What is the use of quoting such passages as Gen. xlix., 3, 'Reuben, thou art my first-born;' Num. i., 20, 'Reuben, Israel's eldest son,' or Deut. xxi., 15-17, when the man's first-born is not to be disinherited upon private affection?"—p. 145.

I reply, "the use of quoting such passages" is to shew in what sense the term *first-born* is used in Scripture.

As certain rights of primogeniture existed since the days of the patriarchs, which were regarded of the utmost importance, the reader may easily imagine what strife and contention it would have given rise to in families where there were several first-born. I, for my part, cannot see how a father who had two, three, four, or more first-born, could possibly have decided who should be the favoured one, without giving offence, and doing great injustice to the others, if they indeed had an equal right to the honour and privileges appertaining to the birth-right. The law which decided the right of primogeniture in case there were several first-born sons, seems to have been well understood, and conscientiously acted upon, even in the times of the patriarchs. Jacob would, no doubt, rather have bestowed



the birth-right upon Joseph, whom he loved above all his brethren, and who was afterwards his benefactor, besides being the first-born of his favourite wife Rachel; but, notwithstanding all these considerations, Jacob still declared "Reuben, my first-born art thou, my might and the beginning of my strength." The crime, however, which Reuben committed, was one of the deepest dye, (see Gen. xxxv., 22,) and the pain and grief which the act caused to the pious and aged patriarch, must have been great in the extreme. Such a deed demanded the severest punishment that was in his power to inflict, and consequently he deprived him of the privileges which belonged to him as first-born; "thou shalt not excel," (Gen. xlix., 4,) *i.e.*, thou art cut off from the pre-eminence which would have belonged to the first-born.\*

There can, therefore, be no question that the term (*bechor*) *first-born*, as already stated, when it refers to human offspring, means the first-born on the father's, as well as on the mother's side, and would consequently have been better rendered by *first-begotten*. That this is the proper meaning of the

---

\* Orkelos, in his Targum, has paraphrased Gen. xlix., 3, "Reuben, my first-born art thou, my might, and the beginning of my strength; thou wouldst have received three portions, the birth-right, (*i.e.*, the double portion of the inheritance,) the priesthood, and the kingdom." The Jerusalem Targum has rendered it: "And for the sin of my son Reuben, the birth-right is given to Joseph, the kingdom to Judah, and the priesthood to Levi." And such was really the case. Joseph obtained the double portion, (compare 1 Chron. v., 1, 2,) on Levi was conferred the priesthood, and Judah obtained the preëminence, as we read 1 Chron. v., 2, "For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him *came* the prince." The tribe of Reuben never obtained any importance, and made no figure in the history of the nation.

term, is evident from its being frequently used in parallelism with *the beginning of strength*; as in Gen. xlix., 3, Deut. xxi., 17, passages above quoted; also, Psalm. lxxviii., 51, “And he smote all the first-born in Egypt; the beginning (Eng. ver., chief) of their strength in the tents (*i.e.*, dwellings) of Ham” (a name of Egypt.) And again, Psalm cv., 36, “He smote, also, all their first-born in their land, all the beginning (Eng. ver., chief) of their strength.”

From these passages it is evident that the phrases *beginning of strength* and *first-born* are synonymous terms, and the sense of the former phrase is (Gen. xlix., 3,) therefore correctly conveyed in the Septuagint in ἀρχὴ τέκνων μου, *i.e.*, *the beginning of my children*.

I have dwelt somewhat at length on this topic, since Dr. Colenso and Kurtz restrict the meaning of the word *first-born* to the mother's side alone, and as it is a matter of great importance to ascertain its proper meaning in the subject under consideration. As polygamy was not prohibited, and as the custom of having many wives generally prevailed in the east, and indeed still does at the present day, we may justly infer that the custom existed also, at least to a certain extent, among the Hebrews. If, then, a man may have had two or more wives, and many children by each—for we must not lose sight of Exod. i., 7—but could only have one first-born, and if we take into consideration, in connexion with this, the many *first-born* that must have been slain by order of Pharaoh, and also that a great many must have died between that time and the number-



ing, besides that mothers frequently lose their first child in child-birth; I say, if we take all these things into consideration, we must at once perceive that the *great mountain* which Dr. Colenso professed to have discovered is, after all, nothing but a *mole-hill*. Every reasonable and unbiased man will see in the small number of *first-born*, not “a discrepancy,” or “palpable self-contradiction,” but undeniable proof of the veracity and genuineness of the Mosaic narrative.

---

## ARTICLE XVI.

---

### THE NUMBER OF PRIESTS AT THE EXODUS COMPARED WITH THEIR DUTIES, AND WITH THE PROVISIONS MADE FOR THEM.

---

“The book of Leviticus,” observes Dr. Colenso, “is chiefly occupied in giving directions to the priests for the proper discharge of the different duties of their office, and further directions are given in the book of Numbers.” He then quotes some of the duties which the priests had to perform, such as the offering of “*burnt-offering*, Lev. i.; *meat-offering*, Lev. ii.; *peace-offering*, Lev. iii.; *trespass-offering*, Lev. v., vi.; *the offering of women after child-birth*, Lev., xii.; *burnt-offering* and *sin-offering* of those cured of leprosy, Lev. xiii.; *daily-offering*, besides *additional sacrifices* on the Sabbath, the New Moon,

at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and at the Feast of the First-fruits, Num. xxviii. In the seventh month, for several days together, besides the daily sacrifice there were to be additional sacrifices, so that on the fifteenth day of the month the priest was to offer 13 bullocks, 2 rams, and 14 lambs, and in the seven days, from the fifteenth to the twenty-first, 70 bullocks, 15 rams, and 89 lambs, Num. xxix." Then he goes on to say :

"And now let us ask, for all these multifarious duties, during the forty years' sojourn in the wilderness—for all the burnt-offering, meat-offering, peace-offering, sin-offering, trespass-offering, thank-offering, &c., of a population like that of the city of London, besides the daily and extraordinary sacrifices—how many priests were there? The answer is very simple. There were only *three*—Aaron (till his death) and his two sons, Eleazar and Ithamar"—pp. 185, 186.

The Mosaic laws, as recorded in the Pentateuch, although given in the wilderness, were more particularly designed to be observed when the Israelites had taken possession of the promised land. It is altogether unreasonable to suppose that the Israelites were obliged to observe strictly every command during their sojourn in the desert. Indeed, Dr. Colenso's own arguments, that Aaron and his two sons could never have performed all the duties assigned to them, and that no pigeons or doves could be obtained in the wilderness, only go to prove, that when the Mosaic laws were given they were not intended to come into full force until the people had settled in Canaan, where they would have all the means of observing them. Dr. Colenso assumes that all the va-



rious sacrifices were offered “during the forty years’ sojourn in the wilderness;” it is an easy matter to make a positive assertion, but not always so easy to substantiate it, and he would have no little difficulty in doing so here; for there is not a word in the whole sacred narrative of any kind of sacrifices having been brought for the space of thirty-eight years at least out of the forty, whilst on the other hand there are strong indications that none were offered.

The reader will remember that whilst the Israelites were encamped at Kadesh, in the wilderness of Paran, twelve spies were sent to spy out the land of Canaan, who, after forty days came back, and with the exception of Joshua and Caleb gave an alarming account of what they had seen, so that they raised a sedition among the people; and when Joshua and Caleb endeavoured to argue with them, assuring them that they had nothing to fear, and that God would surely give them the land, they only became more and more tumultuous, and took up stones to stone them. As a punishment for this rebellious conduct, instead of being permitted to proceed on their journey into the land of Canaan, they were commanded to turn again into the wilderness, where they were to spend *thirty-eight* years more, which, with the two years that had already elapsed since their departure from Egypt, made forty years: making a year for each day that the spies were absent. See Num. xiv. Now, during these thirty eight years’ wandering, all religious rites seem to have been suspended; in fact, during the whole of this period the nation apparently was regarded as under a tempor-

ary rejection by God, and was, therefore, even prohibited from performing the rite of circumcision, (Josh. v., 5-6,) which was the sign of the covenant, and which under other circumstances could not be neglected on the pain of death. Hence we find, Josh. v., 2, that Joshua was commanded to "circumcise again the children of Israel the second time." Will Dr. Colenso tell us, that, notwithstanding the right of circumcision being suspended, the people still offered sacrifices to God? How, for example, could they have celebrated the Passover, when it is again and again stated that none but those who were circumcised were permitted to partake of it; and I would draw the reader's attention to the fact that when in Josh. v., 10, it is said that "the children of Israel encamped at Gilgal, and kept the Passover," it is also immediately before stated that Joshua "circumcised the children of Israel."

But Bishop Colenso quotes Amos v., 25,—\*"Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O House of Israel?"—and remarks, that in the prophet's view, at all events, such sacrifices were required and expected of them. The prophet, however, does not say what sacrifices "were required and expected of them:" there could have been no difficulty in their offering the required

---

\*I may here state, that according to the Hebrew idiom, when the answer in the speaker's opinion should be in the negative, *the interrogation* is equivalent to a *positive negation*. "Have ye offered unto me," *i. e.*, "Ye surely have not offered unto me." So 2 Sam. vii., 5, "Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?" But in the parallel passage 1 Chron. xvii., 4, we have it in the form of a positive negation: "Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in." Compare also ch. xxii., 6, 7, 8. Again, Gen. iv., 9, "Am I my brother's keeper?" meaning, "*I am surely not my brother's keeper.*"



daily sacrifice of two lambs, and occasionally a burnt-offering, meat-offering or sin-offering; what the prophet here says is, that instead of their having offered sacrifices to God, they had given themselves up to idolatry, for in verse 26 he adds, "But ye have borne the tabernacle of your king (idol) and (kiyun) the statues (or images) of your idols, the star of your god, which ye made for yourselves."\* And so Moses in his last address, Deut. xxxii., 17, likewise says, "They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new *gods* that come newly up, whom your fathers feared not." These statements clearly prove that the Israelites did not offer sacrifices to God during the forty years' wandering in the desert, as Dr. Colenso has assumed.

But Dr. Colenso remarks further, that there are "frequent references made in the enunciation of these laws to the camp, Lev. iv., 12, 21, vi., 11, xiii., 46, xiv., 3, 8"—p. 186.

In reply, I observe, that when the Mosaic laws were instituted at Mount Sinai, it was of course expected that on breaking up from thence the Israelites would at once proceed to take possession of the promised land, which would have occupied only *a few months*, it is, therefore, quite reasonable to assume that the laws, so far as practicable, would come into immediate force; nor have I any doubt, but that certain sacrifices were offered during the time that the Israelites encamped under Sinai, hence *the references*

---

\* I have here given the literal rendering from the Hebrew; and sometimes also in other places: if, therefore, the reader finds in any of the quotations a deviation from the English version, he will understand that they have been made from the original.

*to the camp* to which Dr. Colenso alludes. But what do these references amount to? Do they show that Aaron and his sons had more work than they could possibly perform? Let us see.

The first reference is to Lev. iv., 12, 21. "Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp, unto a clean place," &c. This has reference to sin-offering of ignorance; if a man sin through ignorance he was to "bring a bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation," and kill the bullock. This kind of sacrifice was probably of very rare occurrence. But what had the priest to do? Simply, "to put *some* of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense," and also to take the fat, the kidneys, &c., and burn them upon the altar, *vv.* 6-10. Who was to carry the bullock out of the camp, has already been shown in a previous article. The next reference is chap. vi., 11, "And he shall put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes without the camp, unto a clean place." This has reference to the burnt offerings, which were to burn upon the altar all night; the priest is here simply directed to take ashes and carry it out of the camp, whenever this sacrifice is offered. The next reference, chap. xiii., 46, refers merely to the leper, who is here commanded to live without the camp; and I may in passing say, that the leprosy of Miriam is the only case on record during the journeying in the desert. In chap. xiv., 3, 8, there is likewise reference made to the leper only. Now is there any thing in these passages that would indicate an extraordinary amount of work



to be performed by Aaron and his two sons? Even supposing that the continual burnt offering, a lamb in the morning and one in the evening, had been regularly offered, this would involve no great additional labour, for the slaying and skinning could be done by the Levites.

But, continues Dr. Colenso,

“The single work of offering the double sacrifice for women after child-birth, must have utterly overpowered three priests, though engaged without cessation from morning till night. As we have seen, (74) the births among two millions of people, may be reckoned as, at least, 250 a day, for which, consequently, 500 sacrifices (250 burnt-offerings, and 250 sin-offerings) would have had to be offered daily. Looking at the directions in Lev. i., 4, we can scarcely allow less than five minutes for each sacrifice; so that these sacrifices alone, if offered separately, would have taken 2,500 minutes, or nearly 42 hours.” And a little further on he remarks, “But then we must ask further, where could they have obtained these 250 turtle-doves, or young pigeons daily, that is, 90,000 annually, in the wilderness”—p. 187.

Dr. Colenso cannot produce a single instance to show that the offering after child-birth was enforced in the desert. There are many commands in the Mosaic law which could not have been kept in the wilderness, but were only intended to be observed when the Israelites came into the promised land; as, for example, the offering of first-fruits in the ear, Lev. ii., 14; the celebration of the feast of tabernacles, with the various ceremonies to be observed at that feast, Lev. xxiii., 39-44, &c.

Dr. Colenso thinks that there were no pigeons or doves to be found in the wilderness, and that, there-

fore, the laws referring to these birds “could not have been written by Moses, but must have been composed at a later age.” Is it likely that Moses never saw doves or pigeons in Egypt, and did not *know their habits*? The *collared turtle* is still abundant in Egypt, and other parts of the east. I should say, that the mountainous regions of the peninsula of Sinai are just the places where they were found in large numbers. The *biset*, or *wild rock pigeon*, delights in rocky and precipitous cliffs and caverns. The *turtle dove*, also, likes mountainous and sandy countries. Indeed, the Psalmist alludes to *the dove* being a bird of the wilderness of Arabia, when he says, “And I said, O that I had wings like a dove! *for then* would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, *then* would I wander far off, *and* remain (*bammidbar*) in the wilderness.” Jeremiah alludes to the dove frequenting the rocks, and making “her nest in the sides of the hole’s mouth.”—Jer. xlviii., 28. Dr. Colenso tries to explain away the statement of David, he says,

“Yet the Psalmist, in Psalm lv., 6, 7, was hardly thinking of the great and dreadful desert of Sinai. He had, probably, in view the wilderness of Judah”—p. 189.

If David meant here the “wilderness of Judah,” he would have said so, as he did in Psalm lxiii., 1, “A psalm of David, when he was (*bemidbar yehudah*) in the wilderness of Judah.” Dr. Colenso knows, or he ought to know, that *bammidbar*, (*i. e.*, *midbar*), with the article, always denotes *the great Arabian desert*, toward and around Sinai, and that the different parts are distinguished by separate proper names,



as the wilderness of Shur, the wilderness of Paran, the wilderness of Zin, &c. See Gesenius' Lexicon. Why did Dr. Colenso, in quoting the passage, only give *midbar*, instead of *bammidbar*, which would at once have shown that the desert of Arabia is meant? This is not right, as it may mislead some who may not go to the trouble, or may not think of referring to the original. And why does he make use of the words "great and dreadful," with quotation marks, when no such words are used by the Psalmist: in quoting from Scripture in a critical work it should be done with great exactness. But although Dr. Colenso tries hard to prove, pp. 189, 190, that there were no doves or pigeons in the wilderness, yet at p. 192 he says, "The very pigeons to be brought as sin offerings for the birth of children, would have averaged, according to the story, 264 a day; and each priest would have had to eat daily more than 88 for his own portion, in the most holy place!" Why did Dr. Colenso not tell us where it is stated that the pigeons were to be eaten by the priests? I have searched for it, but could nowhere find such a command.

The laws concerning the purifying are given in Lev. xii., but all that is said is, that the offering was to be brought "unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest. Who shall offer it before the Lord, and make an atonement for her," there is not a word that the priest shall eat it.

From what has been advanced on this subject, it is evident, in the first place, that during at least 38 years out of the 40 years' sojourn in the wilderness,

no sacrifices were offered. Secondly, that though the Mosaic laws were given under Sinai it does not follow, and certainly there is no proof, that the strict observance of them was enforced during their sojourn in the desert, except in a few cases specially mentioned.

Before dismissing this subject, I have yet to notice another objection which Dr. Colenso makes, namely, to the allotment of *thirteen* cities to the priests. He says, "Further, in Josh. xxi., we have an account of the forty-eight Levitical cities; and we read, verse 19, 'All the cities of the children of Aaron, the priests, were thirteen cities with their suburbs.'" He objects here, that for so small a number of priests as there were at that time, there should have been provided for them *thirteen* cities and their suburbs.

In reply to this, I shall merely say, that the allotment of the Levites and Priests was made in connexion with the division of the land among the tribes, see chap. xiii.—xx. It is, therefore, not necessary to enquire here whether there were 3 or 4, or 100 priests at that time. The allotment was to be a permanent thing, and this was the most suitable time to make it. It was quite natural to suppose that the priests in course of time would increase, and provision had to be made for that increase. Already in the time of David, we find that the priests had become so numerous, that they were divided into twenty-four classes, each of which officiated a week alternately. Sixteen classes were of the family of Eleazar, and eight of the family of Ithamar.

But although thirteen cities were set apart for the



priests when they were yet few in number, it does not follow that these cities might not be inhabited by families belonging to other tribes ; at any rate so long as the priests were not numerous enough to occupy them all. Accordingly, we find that David on becoming king made Hebron, which was one of the cities assigned to the priests, (see Josh. xx., 7, xxi., 11-13,) his royal residence, where he reigned for seven years and six months. See 2 Sam. v., 5. Anathoth, a city in the land of Benjamin, was also one of the towns set apart for the priests, it was the birth-place of Jeremiah ; but from the treatment which the prophet received at the hands of his fellow townsmen, it clearly indicates that the greatest portion of the inhabitants of that town could not have been priests. See Jer. xi., 21.

---

## ARTICLE XVII.

---

### THE PRIESTS, AND THEIR DUTIES AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE PASSOVER.

---

The objection which Dr. Colenso here advances, is similar to the objections urged in the preceding article, namely, three priests having to perform a certain duty which it was impossible for them to accomplish in the short period specified.

“ We are told, 2 Chron. xxx., 16, xxxv., 2, that the people killed the passover, but *‘the priests sprinkled the blood from their hands,* and the Levites flayed

them.' Hence, when they kept the second passover under Sinai, Num. ix., 5, where we must suppose that 150,000 lambs were killed at one time, 'between the two evenings,' Exod. xii., 6, for the two millions of people, each priest must have had to sprinkle the blood of 50,000 lambs in about two hours, that is, at the rate of about four hundred lambs every minute, for two hours together"—p. 195.

It would of course have been impossible for the three priests to have done the work which Dr. Colenso here asserts they had to perform. But where does Dr. Colenso find in the Mosaic narrative the slightest allusion to *the priests having had to sprinkle the blood of the paschal lambs from their hands, at the keeping of the second passover?* Nay, more, where does he find in the Mosaic law any command at all, that the blood of the paschal lamb should be sprinkled by the priest? There is, in fact, no such command. At the celebration of the first passover, the reader will remember the blood was to be put on "the two side posts, and the upper door post of the houses"—Exod. xii., 7. In verse 13, the reason is assigned why the blood shall be put there, "and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you, to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." In Num. ix., 1-5, the Israelites were commanded to keep the second passover; \* in the 3rd verse we read, "In the four-

---

\* The word passover has three general acceptations in the Scriptures. 1st. It denotes the solemnity celebrated on the fourteenth day of Abib, (*i. e.*, a green ear, or ears,) afterwards also called Nisan, which was strictly the *passover of the lamb*. 2nd. It means the festivity, celebrated on the fifteenth day, which may be called *the feast of passover*, or the "*feast of unleavened bread*," Lev. xxiii., 5, 6. 3rd. It denotes the whole solemnity, commencing on the fourteenth, and ending on the twenty-first day of the month of Abib.



teenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season: and according to all the rites of it, according to all the ceremonies thereof shall ye keep it." There is no allusion either to priests, the tabernacle, or the sprinkling of blood. It is only said that they were to keep it, "according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof." Now, as the *priests and the tabernacle* were not in existence at the time when the passover was first instituted, it follows that the sprinkling of the blood by the priests, or the killing of the lambs "*in the court of the tabernacle*," could form no part of "the ceremonies" here spoken of. It was thirty-eight years after the keeping of the second passover that we find the manner in which it was to be kept somewhat changed. In Deut. xvi., 1-8, we have the laws with respect to the keeping of the passover again laid down; in verses 5, 6, 7, we read, "Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee; but at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt. And thou shalt roast and eat *it* in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents," *i.e.*, thy dwelling. The change made here is, that after the Lord shall have chosen a place to place his name in, then the children of Israel shall no more be permitted to kill the paschal lamb at their homes; but there is still not a word about the sprinkling of blood.

But, says Dr. Colenso, "We are told in 2 Chron. xxx., 16, xxxv., 11, that the people killed the passover, but '*the priests sprinkled the blood from their hands.*'" It is quite possible that after the temple was erected, and the people were obliged to kill the passover "*in the court of the temple,*" that some of the blood was taken and sprinkled upon the altar ; although, as before said, there is no where any command to that effect. But surely Dr. Colenso does not mean to tell us, that because such a custom existed in the time of Hezekiah, it must also have existed in the wilderness ? I will take the same chapters from which he above quoted, and will point out another custom or service which did not exist in the wilderness. In chapter xxx., 21, we read, "And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with great gladness ; and the Levites and Priests praised the Lord day by day, singing (accompanied) with loud instruments unto the Lord." So again in ch. xxxv., 15, we read, "And the singers, the sons of Asaph, were in their place according to the commandment of David." Here, then, we have the custom of singing of psalms accompanied by musical instruments, which certainly did not exist in the tabernacle service in the wilderness. And, no doubt, there were other ceremonies introduced in the Temple which were never practised before.

I might now dismiss this subject, for, from what has been said, the most fastidious of readers must perceive that Dr. Colenso's objection is entirely *groundless*, not to say *ridiculous*. But in order to



show how hard Dr. Colenso labours, and to what “shifts” he has recourse to make out a case, I will examine his argument, which he here advances.

He remarks :

“Besides which, in the time of Hezekiah and Josiah, when it was desired to keep the passover strictly, ‘in such sort as it was written,’ 2 Chron. xxx., 5, the lambs were manifestly killed *in the court of the Temple*. We must suppose, then, that the Paschal lambs in the wilderness were killed *in the court of the tabernacle*, in accordance, in fact, with the strict injunctions of the Levitical Law, that all burnt-offerings, peace-offerings, sin-offerings, and trespass-offerings should be killed before Jehovah, at the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation”—p.p. 195-196.

I reply, after the erection of the Temple, which had a very spacious court, hence called (2 Chron. iv., 9) “the great court,” the lambs were no doubt slain *in the court of the Temple*; for as we have shown from Deut. xvi., the paschal lamb could no longer be killed at home, but in the place where “the Lord God may choose to place his name.” And certainly that was the most convenient place, considering the vast assemblage of people that must have come to Jerusalem to celebrate the passover. But according to the original institution, the lambs were to be slain at home, and the first allusion we have to any change is at the end of the 40 years’ wandering. Nor is the precise time known when the killing of the paschal lamb at home was discontinued—probably not until the temple was erected. But even supposing the lambs had to be brought to be killed “before Jehovah,” it still would not have been *in the court of the tabernacle* but *at the door of the tabernacle of the*

*congregation*, which, as we have already shewn, is quite a distinct place, and where there was plenty of room for all purposes. If Dr. Colenso, had paid more attention to the construction of the tabernacle, he would have saved himself the trouble of calculating the number of "square yards" of the court, and the number of people that could be crowded into that space, and might have prevented many smiles at his ignorance of the subject. Besides, the passover neither belongs to burnt-offerings, peace-offerings, nor to sin-offerings, or trespass-offerings, but to what may be termed a *memorial offering*, and hence the laws regarding the other offerings cannot apply to the killing of the paschal lamb.

But observes Dr. Colenso again :

"We have this most solemn command laid down in Lev. xvii., 3-4, with the penalty of death attached for disobedience. 'What man soever *there be* of the house of Israel that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth *it* out of the camp, and bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord; blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off among his people.' "

I admit that this is a plausible argument, and at first sight appears to be conclusive; but when we examine it more minutely, it will at once become apparent that this law does not in the least affect the passover. Sacrificing to strange gods was a common practice among heathen nations, and the Hebrews themselves apparently had adopted the practice to a great extent; this is evident from Moses' last address, Deut. xxxii., 17, "They sacri-



ficed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not." In order to prevent this abominable practice, God commanded that if an Hebrew killed an animal, whether for the use of his family, or for voluntary sacrifice, he was to bring it to the door of the tabernacle, and then kill it, and have some of the blood sprinkled "upon the altar of the Lord." But the passover was not killed for the common use of a family, nor was it a voluntary offering, but was to be slain altogether on a particular occasion, and both for the killing, and the manner in which it was to be eaten, there existed already special laws, which were given when it was first instituted.

Dr. Colenso also limits the work to be performed by the priests to "two hours," taking for granted that the expression "between the two evenings," the time fixed for killing the paschal lamb, means precisely two hours. Now Dr. Colenso knows perfectly well that neither Jewish nor Christian commentators are agreed upon as to the exact meaning of that expression, and, indeed, any thing that is said upon that subject must necessarily be mere conjecture. The Karaites, Samaritans, and Aben Ezra, have one opinion; the Pharisees have another; Jarchi and Kimchi differ again from the preceding, and so on. As I have shown that the paschal lamb was not slain at the tabernacle, nor the blood sprinkled by the priests during the wandering in the wilderness, and have thus relieved the priests of the labour which Dr. Colenso and Kurtz imposed upon them, it matters not in the least what the expression "between the two evenings" means. There is, however,

one opinion which deserves especially to be noticed; it was held by some ancient Rabbies, and adopted by many modern learned Jews and Christians; according to them, the expression “between the two evenings,” means *the time when the sun begins to decline towards the west, until night*; they regarded the beginning of the declining of the sun as one evening, and the time just after the setting of the sun as the second evening. This would give nearly six hours for the killing of the passover. Of all the opinions, this is certainly the most reasonable, as it afforded ample time, and prevented confusion which must unavoidably have been the result had the time been shorter, considering the great multitude which must have assembled at the Temple to celebrate the passover.

---

## ARTICLE XVIII.

---

### THE NUMBER OF THE PEOPLE AND THE POLL-TAX.

---

“And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, when thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto Jehovah when thou numberest them, that there be no plague among them when thou numberest them. This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half



a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary; an half a shekel shall be the offering of Jehovah."—Exod. xxx., 11-13.

Upon the above passage Dr. Colenso remarks,

"We may first notice in passing, that the expression 'shekel of the sanctuary' in the above passage, could hardly have been used in this way until there *was* a sanctuary in existence, or, rather, until the sanctuary had been some time in existence, and such a phrase had become familiar in the mouths of the people. Whereas, here it is put into the mouth of Jehovah, speaking to Moses on mount Sinai, six or seven months before the tabernacle was made. And in Exod. xxxviii., 24, 25, 26, we have the same phrase used again, of the actual contributions of the people towards the building of the sanctuary"—p. 89.

The objection which Dr. Colenso here urges, is simply, that we have here a certain coin mentioned, called the "shekel of the sanctuary," before the sanctuary actually existed. This, the Bishop thinks, is another proof of "the unhistorical character of the (so called) Mosaic narrative;" to me, however, it appears to be a perfectly childish objection.

The ordinance, that those who were to be numbered should give "half a shekel of the sanctuary," is one of the numerous commands which Moses received from God, in reference to the construction and service of the sanctuary, and are recorded in Exod. xxv. to xxxi., inclusive. The term *sanctuary* is not introduced for the first time in the passage before us, but is already mentioned in ch. xxv., 8, where God said to Moses, "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." From this, the reader will perceive that Moses had previously received the command to build a sanctuary.

Now, for illustration sake, let us suppose that when it was determined upon to erect new parliament buildings, the legislature had likewise passed a law that a special tax should be imposed forthwith, to defray the expenses of the buildings, would not that tax have been called *the parliament building tax*, or by some such name that would indicate the purpose for which it was raised? And why, I would ask, should not *the shekel* which was to be devoted to the service of the sanctuary be called “the shekel of the sanctuary?”

The value of the shekel in common use was of course well known, but “the shekel of the sanctuary” was to differ in value, and here an explanatory phrase is introduced—“a shekel is twenty gerahs.” In the English version the last verse of the passage under consideration reads as follows: “This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs:) an half shekel shall be the offering of the Lord.” The reader will perceive, on referring to the passage at the beginning of this article, as quoted by Dr. Colenso, that he has altogether omitted the explanatory phrase, “(a shekel is twenty gerahs,)” nor has he any where stated upon what authority he has done so. If the Bishop had any doubt as to the phrase being in the original, since it is bracketed in the authorised version, he should have first satisfied himself on this point; for in this connexion the phrase is of great importance, as it clearly shows that “the shekel of the sanctuary” was only then instituted.

In Exod. xxx., 13, we have merely the insti-



tution of the ordinance, that hereafter whenever a general numbering was to take place, those that went to be numbered should give "half a shekel after the sanctuary" as atonement money, which was to be devoted as stated in verse 16, to "the service of the tabernacle;" and there is, therefore, nothing inconsistent in *the sanctuary* being mentioned, although not yet erected.

But Dr. Colenso goes on to say :

"Now in Exod. xxxviii., 26, we read of such a tribute being paid, 'a bekah for every man, that is, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary, for every one that went to be numbered, from twenty years old and upwards,' that is, the atonement money is collected; but nothing is here said of any census being taken. On the other hand, in Num. i., 1-46, more than six months after the date of the former occasion, we have an account of the formal numbering of the people. \* \* \* \* Here the census is made, but there is no indication of any atonement money being paid."

From the language employed in Exod. xxxviii., 25, 26, it is evident that the formal census was taken; the silver being required for the construction of the tabernacle, those that were of the proper age paid *the half shekel*, which on counting was found to amount to "an hundred talents, and a thousand seven hundred and threescore and fifteen shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary," representing 603,550 men from "twenty years old and upwards." As it was no formal numbering of the people, therefore nothing is said of any *census* being taken. In Num. i., the case is quite different, there "the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel after their families by the house of their fathers, with the number of their names" was to be taken; the object appears to

have been to obtain the precise number of each tribe, probably with a view of arranging them in the encampment. As the half shekel had been paid only a few months before, it is hardly reasonable to suppose that it was required again to be given at this numbering, but more than likely the numbering here was entirely based upon the *atonement money* previously paid, and all that was here required was, that those who had shortly before paid the *half shekel*, were to declare their pedigree ; so that in reality the numbering in Exod. xxxviii., and the numbering in Num. i., must be taken in connexion with one another ; the former furnishes the total number of Hebrews from twenty years and upwards, the latter gives the number of each tribe ; and this accounts not only for no mention being made of *atonement money* being paid, (see Num. i.,) but likewise also for the total number in both places being precisely alike, namely 603,550.

I do not know upon what authority Dr. Colenso assumes that six or seven months elapsed between the first and second numbering: it may or it may not have been so ; this much we know, however, that the tabernacle was set up “on the first day of the first month,” Exod. xl., 2, and the numbering in Num. i. took place in the second month, (see verse 1,) and it may probably not have taken more than two or three months to make the sockets, poles, and hooks, in which case only three or four months could have elapsed. But be that as it may, and even allowing a whole year to have transpired, it would still be unreasonable to suppose that two distinct census should have been taken in such a short space of time.



## ARTICLE XIX.

---

### THE DANITES AND LEVITES AT THE TIME OF THE EXODUS.

---

In a former article I have, I think, clearly shown that the difficulties which Dr. Colenso finds in regard to the immense increase of the Israelites in Egypt are altogether visionary, and as the subject of this article is somewhat of a similar character, I trust to be able to satisfy even the most hypercritical of my readers that his objections here are likewise only imaginary.

The first objection which Dr. Colenso advances is to the number of the Danites. He remarks :

“Dan, in the first generation, has *one* son, Hushim, Gen. xlv., 23, and that he had no more born to him in the land of Egypt, and, therefore had *only* one son, appears from Num. xxvi., 42, where the sons of Dan consist of only one family. Hence we may reckon that in the fourth generation he would have had 27 warriors descended from him, instead of 62,700, as they are numbered in Num. ii., 26, increased to 64,400 in Num. xxvi., 43. In order to have had this number born to him, we must suppose that Dan’s one son, and each of his sons and grandsons, must have had about 80 children of both sexes”—p. 168.

Here, at the very threshold, we meet again with Dr. Colenso’s pet argument—Dan had only one son, because only one son is mentioned ; such is the iron

rule with which he endeavours to fetter the investigation of his opponents, though he himself does not scruple to take things for granted, as has been shewn in a former article. He being obliged, however, to have recourse to such a feeble argument, is only *a strong proof of the unsoundness of his position*.

The Bishop argues that Dan could have had only one son, because "the sons of Dan consist of only one family;" but Dan may have had other sons who were not heads of families, and, therefore, their names do not appear in Num. xxvi., where only the heads of families are given. All the other sons of Dan and their descendants would be reckoned among the family of Hushim,\* he being mentioned among those that come into Egypt with Jacob.—Gen. xlv., 23. It would surely be unreasonable to suppose that none of Jacob's sons had any children born to them after they came into Egypt. I think it would be difficult to find a critic of any note that would venture to make such a statement, and yet this is exactly what Dr. Colenso's argument amounts to. It is quite plain the dullest reader cannot fail to perceive that only the heads of families are mentioned in Num. xxvi., and it would, therefore, be simply absurd to say that the sons of Jacob had no other sons except those that are there mentioned.

But supposing Dan had no more sons after he came into Egypt, does it follow that the narrative

---

\* Hushim, elsewhere called Shuham, see Num. xxvi., 42, and his descendants Shuhamites. The difference in the two names may perhaps be owing to the transcriber having transposed the letters, and omitted the latter, (*yod*) which probably was faintly written, and being the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet,



must, on that account, be incorrect? If A. has only one son, may not B., his son, have a great many?

Dr Colenso argues, inasmuch as

“The sons of Dan consist of only one family, hence we may reckon that in the fourth generation he would have had 27 warriors descended from him, instead 62,700—p. 168.

That is allowing 3 sons to Hushim, 3 sons to each of his sons, and again 3 sons to each of these, in all 27. Dr. Colenso actually allows 3 sons to each of Hushim's descendants, and this, I suppose, he thinks fully satisfies the statement in Exod. i., 7, “And the children of Israel were fruitful, and \*increased abundantly, and waxed exceedingly mighty.” Had Dr. Colenso not endeavoured, throughout his book, to make the Mosaic narrative appear as ridiculous as he could, I should almost have felt inclined to ascribe the above argument to his Zulu assistant, rather than to the learned Bishop of Natal.

But what authority had Dr. Colenso for assuming the number “three” at all, since the Scriptures are altogether silent on this subject? None whatever—it is altogether a gratuitous assumption, and I would therefore have as much right to insist on *fifteen* or *twenty* being the probable rate of increase—which, after all, would be more in accordance with Exod. i., 7. There is, however, no necessity for assuming so large a number. I have already shown, (see article on the increase of the children of Israel,)

---

\* The Hebrew verb *yishrets*, rendered in the English version “increased abundantly,” is generally used in connexion with reptiles, and the smaller aquatic animals, indicating their rapid increase, in fact the verb means *to swarm*. Now it is worthy to remark here, that only in the above passage is this verb employed with reference to the increase of mankind.

that instead of reckoning only “four generations,” as Dr. Colenso does, the 215 years’ stay in Egypt gives seven generations, of 31 years each; this subject has been already so fully discussed that it requires no farther remarks here. Now let us suppose that Hushim had 7 sons, that is 5 sons less than Jacob, or 3 less than Benjamin, and that the increase during the seven generations was at the same ratio, the result will be as follows :

1st generation.....	1	4th generation.....	343
	7		7
	—		—
2nd “ .....	7	5th “ .....	2401
	7		7
	—		—
3rd “ .....	49	6th “ .....	16807
	7		7
	—		—
4th “ .....	343	7th “ .....	117649

*i. e.*, 53,249 more than the number required; in fact the rate of increase is not quite at the rate of  $6\frac{1}{2}$ . This is certainly nothing so very extraordinary, when we take into consideration that the Hebrews are said to have “increased abundantly,” or, according to the original, *swarmed*. But even this rate of increase would be greatly reduced, if we suppose that many of the servants may have become incorporated with the family of Hushim, or if it should have so happened that Hushim had 16, 18, or 20 sons. Perhaps the reader will say that these are extravagant numbers; if so, I must refer him to Judges xii., 8, 9, where he will find that Ibzan, of



Bethlehem, had no less than "thirty sons," and "thirty daughters." In verse 14 we find that Abdon, the son of Hillel, had "forty sons, and thirty nephews." Jair, the Gileadite, had also "thirty sons"—Judges x., 3, 4. In 2 Kings x., 13, 14, it is recorded that Jehu slew forty-two brethren of Ahaziah, king of Judah. Gideon, according to Judges viii., 30, had "three-score and ten sons of his body begotten, for he had many wives." Ahab, too, according to 2 Kings x., 1, had "seventy sons." In a former article I have given several instances of very large families in our times. Why, then, may not Hushim have had a great many sons; considering, too, that a special blessing rested upon the Hebrews in Egypt. Further, it is not at all unlikely that there may have been nine generations, as in the case of Joshua already mentioned; this, too, would greatly decrease the proportion above given.

It is, therefore, evident from what has been stated, that Dr. Colenso's objections to the number of Hushim's family, as given Numb. xxvi., 43, are utterly groundless; and that so far from each of Hushim's descendants requiring to have "80 children of both sexes" to give the required number, *seven sons* would give 53,249 warriors more than required, and under certain circumstances even that number may be greatly reduced.

But, continues Dr. Colenso, "We may observe also that the offspring of the one son of Dan, 62,700, is represented as nearly double that of the *ten* sons of Benjamin, 35,400, Num. ii., 23"—p. 168.

What Dr. Colenso points out here as a discrepancy,

appears to me to be a striking proof of the authenticity of the Mosaic account, for an imposter would never have dreamed of setting down the descendants from one person in the space of 215 years at nearly double the number of those descended from ten persons? There are various causes which may have contributed to produce this result. In the first place, some of Benjamin's sons may have died childless; indeed, as only five of his sons are mentioned in the second numbering, Num. xxvi., 58, seems to indicate that such was the case. Secondly, the descendants of Benjamin may have had a great many more daughters than sons, whilst the descendants of Dan may have had far more sons than daughters, which would at once produce the result. To make this more clear, let us suppose that Hushim had twelve sons whilst Belah, the eldest son of Benjamin, had only one or two sons and nine or ten daughters; of course all the sons of Hushim would go to swell their father's family, whilst the daughters of Belah would not contribute in the least to increase the family of their father, unless they married proselytes, in which case their descendants might have been reckoned with the family of Belah; this would be, however, a rare occurrence. Thirdly, the descendants of Dan may on the whole have had larger families than the descendants of Benjamin; the offspring of the former, too, may have been more healthy than those of the latter. A few such instances of extensive progeny as I have noticed in a former article would contribute not a little to swell considerably the family of Dan.

But again, Dr. Colenso, I suppose, thought that he



had made out such a good case with respect to the family of Dan, that he would likewise try what could be done in this way as regards the family of Levi, and forthwith the favourite test is applied, and sure enough he discovered that "the whole number of Levites, who would be numbered at the first census, would be only 44, viz.: 20 Kohathites, 12 Gershonites, 12 Merarites, instead of 8,580 as they are numbered in Num. iv. 48"—p. 169.

Bishop Colenso's mode of calculation must recommend itself to all statistical writers, as being, at all events, attended with the least possible trouble in ascertaining the probable increase of a population, particularly if extending over a period of two or three hundred years. All that is required, is, to find out the number of children of A., and then take it for granted that B. C. D. E., &c., must have respectively the same number ; nothing can be more simple. It would of course be somewhat unfortunate, if it should so happen that A. had no children at all, or if, on the contrary, he chanced to have 18 or 20. The reader will perhaps think that this is an extravagant view of the Bishop's mode of calculating ; but surely the examples I have already given of it, clearly shew that it is by no means exaggerated, and I will now proceed to shew, that, in this instance also, the system is fully carried out.

Dr. Colenso sets out with his stereotyped argument, that as there are only three sons of Levi mentioned, he could have had no more; "we have," he says, "in Exod. vi., the genealogy before quoted, of the three sons of Levi, who came with Jacob into Egypt—Gershon, Kohath, Merari"—p. 168.

Now it is true that these three are the only sons mentioned in Gen. xlvii., 11, but how many sons may Levi have had after he came into Egypt, but not being heads of families, their names would of course not appear in Exod. vi., for in verse 14 it is distinctly stated, "these be the heads of their fathers' houses." But not only does Dr. Colenso apply this rule to Levi, but likewise to his sons. In verse 17, there are two sons of Gershon mentioned, in verse 18, four sons of Kohath, and in verse 19, two sons of Merari; from this the Bishop concludes that these are all the sons of the three sons of Levi, and this too, with the plain statement in verse 14 before him, "These *be* the heads of their fathers' houses." But how could they have been heads of houses, if there were no other sons who were not heads? A king implies the existence of a nation to reign over; a governor or ruler, people to rule over, and so, I suppose, "heads of families" imply the existence of families to preside over. According to Bishop Colenso's mode of reasoning, there would be heads without families. To follow out the Bishop's novel mode of argument, we must assume, as there are no grandsons of Gershon and Merari mentioned in Exod. vi., there were none, and that, therefore, the family of Levi continued only in the line of Kohath; but when we come to examine Num. iii., we find that the sons of Gershon, and the sons of Merari, must have had children, and that they again must have had sons, for in verse 24 it is said, "And the chief of the house of the father of the Gershonites *shall be* Eliasaph, the son of Lael;" and in verse 35, "And the



chief of the house of the father of the families of Merari was Zuriel, the son of Abihail." Here, then, we have descendants of Gershon and Merari introduced, who have never been mentioned before. This shews clearly the utter fallacy of Bishop Colenso's mode of reasoning.

I maintain, therefore, that the genealogical lists contain only the names of the heads of families, or such persons who have filled other important offices, or of those who have in some way or other obtained notoriety.

If we, however, for argument sake, admit that Levi had no other sons than those whose names are given, we would still have no difficulty in accounting for the 22,000 Levites mentioned in Num. iii., 39, for if we suppose that the three sons of Levi had each six sons, and that such was the rate of increase, this would give us in the sixth generation from Levi 23,328 Levites, that is 1328 more than the number required. This, I think, it must be admitted, is but a moderate allowance, if, indeed, the statement in Exodus i., 7, means any thing at all.

But Dr. Colenso finds yet another inconsistency, or rather I should have said, "a great inconsistency." He remarks :

"We are told Num. xxvi., 62, that at the *second* census, 'those that were numbered of them were 23,000, all males from one month old and upward.' And at the *first* census, Num. iii., 39, 'All that were numbered of the Levites, all the males from a month old and upwards, were 22,000.' Hence, during the thirty-eight years in the wilderness, they had only increased in number by 1000 upon 22,000."

The Bishop is evidently a critic not easily to be pleased ; one minute he finds fault with the increase being too great, and the next with the increase being too small.

In order to make out a case Dr. Colenso points out the tribe of Manasseh as having increased in thirty-eight years from 32,300 to 52,700, p. 172, but why does he stop his comparison here ?—why not extend it to the other tribes ? The following table exhibits the numbers of each tribe at the two census, and the reader will perceive from it how absurd Dr. Colenso's objection is as to the small increase of the tribe of Levi :

FIRST CENSUS.		SECOND CENSUS.	
Num. i.		Num. xxvi.	
Ruben.....46,500	verse 21.....	43,730	verse 7.
Simeon.....59,300	do 23.....	22,200	do 14.
Gad.....45,650	do 25.....	40,500	do 18.
Judah.....74,600	do 27.....	76,500	do 22.
Issachar.....54,400	do 29.....	64,300	do 25.
Zebulun .....57,400	do 31.....	60,500	do 27.
Ephraim .....40,500	do 33.....	32,500	do 37.
Manasseh.....32,200	do 35.....	52,700	do 34.
Benjamin .....35,400	do 37.....	45,600	do 41.
Dan..... ..62,700	do 39.....	64,400	do 43.
Ashar.....41,500	do 41.....	53,400	do 47.
Naphtali.....53,400	do 43.....	45,400	do 50.

Thus it will be seen that Judah, the largest tribe, was almost stationary, and so was Dan, Zebulun, and Reuben, whilst Simeon decreased from 59,300 to 22,000, Ephraim from 40,500 to 32,000.

The difference in the numbers clearly shews that it is not the work of an imposter, but that the numbers are



founded upon facts. We know from experience that the increase of population of countries and cities fluctuate greatly ; sometimes they are for a while stationary, or even a decrease may take place, whilst at other times they increase suddenly, and frequently at a rapid rate.

Dr. Colenso thinks, too, that the Levites were not included in the sentence passed upon the congregation generally, because Eleazar the son of Aaron was alive even after the death of Joshua, and as it is said in Num. ii., 33, xxvi., 62, “ that they were not numbered among the children of Israel.” But surely the fact that Eleazar did not die in the wilderness, does not prove that the Levites were not involved in the general doom, for Joshua and Caleb likewise survived to enter the promised land. There is not a word in the sacred narrative which would indicate that the Levites did not fall under the sentence pronounced against the Israelites for their rebellious conduct in Num. xiv., 22, 23. As to their not being numbered with the “ children of Israel,” it simply means, that when the census of the people was taken they were not numbered among them—they having been set apart for a special purpose, and were numbered separately.

---

## ARTICLE XX.

---

### THE NUMBER OF ISRAELITES, COMPARED WITH THE EXTENT OF CANAAN.

---

“I will send my fear before thee, and I will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee. And I will send hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before thee; I will not drive them out from before thee in one year, lest the land become desolate, and the beasts of the field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased and inherit the land.”—Exod. xxiii., 27-30.

Upon the above passage Dr. Colenso remarks:

“The whole land which was divided among the tribes in the time of Joshua, including the countries beyond Jordan, was in extent about 11,000 square miles, or 7,000,000 acres; (*Kitto's Geogr. of the Holy Land, Knight's series, p. 7;*) and according to the story, this was occupied by more than two millions of people. Now the following is the extent of the three English agricultural counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex, with a population according to the census of 1851:

	Acrs.	Pop. in 1851.
Norfolk contains.....	1,354,301.....	442,714
Suffolk       “ .. .. .	947,681.....	337,215
Essex         “ .. .. .	1,060,549.....	369,318
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,362,531	1,149,247



“By doubling the above results, we find that these counties of England are, at this very time, about as thickly peopled as the land of Canaan would have been with its population of Israelites only, without reckoning the aboriginal Canaanites, who already filled the land—‘seven nations, greater and mightier’ than Israel itself—Deut. iv., 38, vii., 1, ix., 23. And surely it cannot be said that these three eastern counties, with their flourishing towns.....and their innumerable villages, are in any danger of lying ‘desolate,’ with the Philan was admitted; and it was also admitted or proved that beasts of the field multiplying against the human inhabitants.”

And a little further on he draws a comparison with the colony of Natal, showing that though the

“Population is very scanty, and the land will allow of a much larger one, yet the human inhabitants are perfectly well able to maintain their ground against the beasts of the field”—pp. 138, 139.

I have given a full extract, to shew that the Bishop has spared no labour to make out a case of inconsistency against the statement in the above passage; but in reality, to use a familiar phrase, he has all the while been fighting a mere shadow. No doubt Kitto has given a proper estimate of the size of the country which was divided among the tribes at the time of Joshua, and I have no doubt that the estimate of the three counties above mentioned is likewise correct, but, notwithstanding all this, the Bishop is *altogether wrong*, and for the simple reason that he has entirely mistaken the country here spoken of. It is very strange, I might almost say unfortunate—for it does not look well for a bishop to make such a blunder—that when he quoted from verse 27 to 30 he should never have glanced his eyes at verse

31, where the limits of the country are fully laid down. "*And I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea, even unto the sea of the Philistines,\* and from the desert unto† the river: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and thou shalt drive them out before thee.*"

According to the boundaries here laid down, the land in question contains about 50,000 square miles, or 32,000,000 acres, and is, therefore, more than four times in extent to that given by Dr. Colenso. The limits of the land have already been before defined in the promise to Abraham, Gen. xv., 18; and in Num. xxxiv., 2 to 12, inclusive, the boundaries are laid down with the greatest precision, indeed, in no modern *deed* could a tract of land be described with greater nicety. I would recommend the reader to examine these passages. The population of that country is, at the present day, about 2,000,000, and all travellers agree that more than half of the richest parts of the country are lying perfectly desolate. The waste plains of Moab, of Esdraelon, and the whole valley of the Jordan are without an inhabitant. In the plains of Philistia, Sharon, Bashan, &c., not one-eighth part of the soil is cultivated, and yet the Bishop maintains that the country could not have contained such a

---

\*The Mediterranean is above called the "Sea of the Philistines," as that people possessed the largest proportion of its shores in Palestine. This sea being the largest sea with which the Hebrews were acquainted, hence it is also elsewhere called the "great sea." See Num. xxxiv., 6, Josh. i. 4.

†The Euphrates, *par excellence* called "the river," see again Gen. xxxi. 21, Isaiah viii., 7. This use of the *article of pre-eminence* exists also in other languages, as for example the Greek τὸ βιβλίον, *the book*, i. e., the Bible; in the Arabic, (alkitabur,) *the book*, i. e., the Koran.



population as is assigned to it in the Mosaic narrative.

But, argues the Bishop further,

“Surely it cannot be said that these three eastern counties, with their flourishing towns of Norwich, Lynn, Yarmouth,” &c., “and their innumerable villages, are in any danger of lying ‘desolate,’ with the beasts of the field multiplying against the human inhabitants.”

Dr. Colenso is certainly most unhappy in his comparisons. I would ask him how many pheasants, hares, or indeed how much of any kind of game would now be left not only in those “eastern counties,” but in all England, if it were not for the very rigorous game laws? The comparison is absurd in the extreme. But, says Dr. Colenso, even in the colony of Natal, “the human inhabitants are perfectly able to maintain their ground against the beasts of the field.” And so they might in any part of Africa, after being for some time peopled, particularly if the inhabitants freely use fire-arms. It is a well established fact, that wild beasts do not remain long in a place after man has fixed his habitation there, and freely used fire-arms. In the island of Cayenne on the coast of Guiana, for instance, the tigers were a terrible scourge to the infant colony; they were formerly seen swimming over in great numbers from the continent to attack and ravage the flocks and herds of the inhabitants, but by degrees they were repulsed and destroyed, and are now no longer seen at that place. See Buffon, vol. xix., p. 22.

We can of course form no adequate idea after a lapse of upwards of three thousand years, to what extent the land of Canaan and the neighbouring coun-

tries were infested with wild beasts ; it would not at all be a surprising thing if they were by this time entirely exterminated, though I shall presently shew that such is not the case. There apparently was a time when even the southern parts of Europe were infested by the lion. We have, however, many indications in Scripture that the wild beasts must have been very numerous in the land of Canaan and the neighbouring countries. See Gen. xxxvii., 33, xlix., 9, 27 ; 1 Sam. xvii., 34, 35, 36 ; 2 King ii., 24 ; Hosea xiii., 7, 8 ; Lam. iii., 10 ; Amos v. 19 ; Jer. v. 6, and in many other places they are alluded to. The constant allusion to wild beasts, and the frequent pictures which the sacred writers have drawn from their habits clearly shew that they must have been very numerous. But wild beasts, though they are no doubt greatly diminished, still exist in Palestine. Rabbi Schwarz, who resided for sixteen years in that country, says :

“ The wolf is very common in Palestine. The bear is found in the mountains of Lebanon, Chermouk, Carmel, and Tabor. The hyena, so dangerous to human life, and which has so great a propensity for the exhumation of corpses, has been met with even on Mount Olivet, the burial place of the Jerusalem Jews. The tiger is met with on the banks of the Jordan in the vicinity of Jericho, as also on Mount Tabor and Lebanon. The Arabs are in the habit of kindling fires around their tents at night, in order to keep off the tigers, which dread nothing so much as fire.” Desc. Geo., p. 202.

It is well known that bears have destroyed whole vineyards in one night on the sides of the Anti-Lebanon, and that if the peasants were not generally



well armed with rifles, the grain crops and vineyards in many parts of Syria would be entirely destroyed.

I think enough has now been said to show, that Dr. Colenso's objections to the statements in the passage under consideration are altogether groundless.

---

## ARTICLE XXI.

---

### MOSES AND JOSHUA ADDRESSING ALL ISRAEL.

---

“And afterwards he read all the law, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and their little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.”—Joshua viii., 34, 35.

The reading of “the blessings and the cursings” spoken of in the above passage, was the fulfilment of the command given by Moses, Deut. xxvii., where also the ceremony which was to be observed on the occasion is fully described. But, observes Dr. Colenso,

“How, then, is it conceivable that a man should do what Joshua is here said to have done, unless, indeed, the reading every ‘word of all that Moses commanded,’ with ‘the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law,’ was a mere dumb show, without the least idea of those most solemn words being heard by those to whom they

were addressed? For surely no human voice, unless strengthened by a miracle, of which Scripture tells us nothing, could have reached the ears of a crowded mass of people, as large as the whole population of London. The very crying of the 'little ones,' who are expressly stated to have been present, must have sufficed to drown the sounds at a few yards distance"—p. 83.

According to the reasoning of Dr. Colenso then, a riot act read, or a public proclamation made to a large concourse of people, is "a mere dumb show," since few of those assembled on such occasions generally hear one word of what is said.

It would, of course, be unreasonable to suppose that in an assembly of 2,000,000 people, every man, woman, and child could have heard the "blessings and cursings," as they were pronounced by Joshua, nor was it necessary that they should have heard them; all that was required was, that they should heartily join in saying Amen, and this, as I shall presently show, the farthest from Joshua could easily do.

The ceremony spoken of in the passage under consideration, was a grand and solemn national ceremony, perhaps, indeed, the most solemn in the history of the Jewish nation, and was obviously designed as a public avowal of the obligations, on their taking possession of the promised land, to keep all the commandments and statutes which the Lord God had commanded them. Now as the people were already acquainted with the import of the "blessings and cursings," for they were not now first promulgated by Joshua, but had been previously communicated



to the people by Moses and the elders, (see Deut. xxvii., 1, 2,) surely it cannot be said that it was "a mere dumb show," when all devoutly, joined in saying Amen at the end of each blessing and cursing, although they may not have heard the reading. Those who stood near, and could hear the reading, would, at the proper time, utter with a loud voice Amen, which would be taken up by the rest of the assembly. The people were well acquainted with all the particulars of the religious act which they were performing, and it is, therefore, inconsistent to call it "a mere dumb show," merely because some of the large concourse of people could not hear the reading of the blessings and cursings.

But although some may not have distinctly heard, it is certain that the greatest part of the assembly must have done so ; this will at once become apparent when we take into consideration the locality where the ceremony took place, and the manner in which it was performed. It is now universally admitted that Ebal and Gerizim were the ancient names of the two mountains forming the opposite sides of the valley in which was situated the ancient town of Shechem the modern Nabulus.

The distance of these mountains from each other has led Eusebius and Jerome to adopt the supposition that Ebal and Gerizim were situated near Jericho ; but although there is a wide interval between the tops of the two mountains the lower spurs, on which, no doubt, the tribes were stationed, approach much closer to each other. Let us now turn to Deut. xxvii., and see how the ceremony was to be

performed. In verses 12 and 13 of that chapter, we read that six tribes were to stand on mount Ebal and six on mount Gerizim, and in verse 14 it is said, "And the Levites shall speak and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice."

If we now take what is here said in connexion with what is recorded in Josh. vii., 34, "And afterwards he read aloud the words of the law, the blessings and cursings," it is evident that Joshua read each sentence, which was afterwards taken up by the Levites, who pronounced it with "a loud voice," and the people said Amen at the close of each blessing and cursing. The Levites, who were numerous, were no doubt stationed so as to make them best heard by the people, so that there were after all probably not many even in this large assembly who were prevented by the distance from hearing the laws pronounced.

There is, however, another circumstance which Dr. Colenso seems to have altogether ignored, but which must not be passed over unnoticed here, as it affords, almost in itself, a sufficient reply to Dr. Colenso's objection. It is well known that in the clear and elastic atmosphere of the east the voice will travel to a very great distance. This fact is noticed by many travellers. Mr. Stanley says:

"From the highest point of Ras Sasafeh to its lower peak, a distance of about sixty feet, the page of a book, distinctly but not loudly read, was perfectly audible; and every remark of the various groups of travellers descending from the heights of the same point rose clearly to those immediately above them."—*Sinai and Palestine*, p. 13.



Dr. Bonar observes :

“The two mountains” (Ebal and Gerizim) “look very near each other, though one is deceived as to the distance here. Yet it did not seem an unlikely thing that parties should answer each other from the heights. I asked especially as to this, Mr. Rogers, the excellent consul of Khaifa, who is at present here on business. He mentioned that it is quite a common thing for the villagers to call to each other from the opposite hills, and that the voice is heard quite distinctly. Having already found in the desert how far the sound is carried, I did not think the distance between Ebal and Gerizim at all greater than between some of those places where we had already tried our voices.”—*Land of Promise*, p. 371.

Dr. Thompson remarks :

“Mount Ebal is on the north, Gerizim on the south, and the city (Nabulus) between. Near the eastern end the vale is not more than sixty rods wide ; and just here, I suppose, the tribes assembled to hear ‘the blessings and the cursings’ read by the Levites.”

And a little further on he says :

“I have shouted to hear the echo, and then fancied how it must have been, when the loud-voiced Levites proclaimed from the naked cliffs of Ebal, ‘Cursed be the man that maketh any graven image, an abomination unto Jehovah,’ and then the tremendous Amen! ten-fold louder from the mighty congregation, rising and swelling from Ebal to Gerizim, and from Gerizim to Ebal.”—*The Land and the Book*, p 470.

In Jotham’s address from “the top of mount Gerizim,” to the inhabitants of Shechem, in the valley below, (see Judges ix.,) we have another striking example to what a great distance the voice may be heard in those regions. If, then, Jotham’s long parable, uttered on the top of mount Gerizim,

could be distinctly heard by the inhabitants of the valley below, we may safely conclude that the Israelites could not have had much difficulty in hearing the short sentences pronounced by the Levites; considering, too, that these stood in the valley, whilst six of the tribes were stationed on their right, and six on their left, on the spurs of the mountains.

---

## ARTICLE XXII.

---

### THE WAR ON MIDIAN.

---

Dr. Colenso begins this subject with some extraneous remarks, he says,

“We have now concluded our preliminary work of pointing out some of the most prominent inconsistencies and impossibilities which exist in the story of the Exodus, as it lies before us in the Pentateuch; and we have surely exhibited enough to relieve the mind from any superstitious dread in pursuing farther the consideration of this question,” p. 204.

I feel satisfied that every candid and unbiassed reader of the preceding replies will admit that the “prominent inconsistencies and impossibilities” which the Bishop points out to “exist in the story of Exodus” have been fully and satisfactorily explained. At this distant period of time, it is of course impossible to state precisely how *this* or *that* event recorded in the Pentateuch transpired—no reasonable person will make such a demand—it is



sufficient when we point out how these events may have taken place, and that they involve no "impossibilities."

The Bishop next proceeds to notice some "extravagant statements," as he calls them, "of Hebrew writers." He remarks,

"Judges xii., 6, where we are told that the Gileadites, under Jephthah, slew of their brethren, the Ephraimites, 42,000 men, or that in Judges xx., where first the Benjamites slew of the Israelites 40,000 men, v. 21, 25, and then the Israelites kill of the Benjamites 43,100, v. 35, 44, all being 'men of valour,' that 'drew the sword;' or that in 1 Sam. iv., 10, where the Philistines slew of the Israelites 30,000 footmen," &c., pp. 206, 207.

And what does Dr. Colenso wish us to infer from all this? Of course, that the book of Judges, the two books of Samuel, and the two books of Chronicles, "cannot be regarded as historically true." If Dr. Colenso does not evince much power and erudition in his arguments, he at least shows a great deal of tact in trying to disarm his opponents. Fearing lest the testimony of Josephus might be brought forward, he says in a note, p. 207, "in fact, Josephus' numbers are frequently as extravagant and unreal as those of the Scripture writers." The Bishop of Natal may find these numbers large, many infidel and rationalistic writers have done so before him, but he that recognises the finger of God in all these events, will not hesitate to receive them as *historically true*. Dr. Colenso draws a comparison with the loss sustained by the allies at Waterloo. He says they had only "4,172 men" killed; but how

many wounded had they? The loss of Wellington's army is set down at 15,000 men, and that of the Prussians at 7,000 men. The loss of the French in the battle and pursuit is said to have been at least 40,000 men. But why bring forward a modern engagement as a comparison—why not rather make some comparisons with engagements recorded in ancient history, where we would have a greater similarity in the mode of warfare, and the arms employed? In ancient battles the slaughter seems to have been much greater than in modern battles, and may probably be accounted for from the contending armies becoming generally engaged in a hand to hand fight. Let the reader picture to himself two hostile lines of masses, at least ten in depth, advancing one against another, each in full confidence of victory, and when once engaged in hand to hand fight, there not being the least chance of retreat, for the hindermost ranks not being exposed to the first slaughter, would, of course, press on, which would prevent the foremost from falling back, so that nothing but determined valour could ensure victory; and he may form some idea that in such a struggle the loss of life must necessarily be enormous. The custom of poisoning the arrows, seems to have been very prevalent, hence the expression in Job vi., 4, "For the arrows of the Almighty *are* within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit." And from Psalm cxx., 4, it would appear that there existed a custom of using arrows with some burning material attached to them; "Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper."



There can be no doubt, that the great loss of life in battles which we so frequently read of in ancient history, must have been owing to the peculiar mode of warfare practised in those times. \*

Dr. Colenso calls the numbers in Scripture "extravagant statements of Hebrew writers:" let us compare them with some of the numbers given in ancient history. At the battle near the town of Issus, 333 B. C., between the Macedonians or Greeks, and the Persians, the latter, it is said, lost 100,000 men. At the battle near Arbela 331 B. C., the Persians are said to have had 300,000 men slain; this number is no doubt greatly exaggerated, though their loss seems to have been very great. The Macedonians are said to have lost only 500 men. At Zama, in Africa, the Carthaginians lost 40,000 men in killed and prisoners. Antiochus (Epiphanes) irritated at the frequent revolts of the Jews marched to Jerusalem, slew 80,000 people, and took 40,000 captives. Scipio Æmilianus attacked the Carthaginian army which was stationed without the walls of Carthage, and killed 70,000 men, besides taking 10,000 prisoners. Jugurtha, king of Numidia, lost in a battle against the Romans under Marius, 108 B. C., 90,000 men. The Cimbri and Teutones in a short war with the Romans under Marius, had several hundred thousand men slain. These few examples out of the many that might be adduced must suffice.

Bishop Colenso next alludes to the spoiling of the Midianites; he remarks,

"But how thankful we must be that we are no longer obliged to believe as a matter of fact, of vital consequence

to our eternal hope, the story related in Num. xxxi., when we are told that a force of 12,000 Israelites ‘slew *all* the males of the Midianites, took captive *all* the females and children, seized all their cattle,’ &c., “without the loss of a single man”—p. 209. And in the following page he says, “The tragedy of Cawnpore, where three hundred were butchered, would sink into nothing, compared with such a massacre, if, indeed, we were required to believe it.”

The Israelites were by the immediate command of God directed to vex the Midianites, for they had in conjunction with the Moabites designedly enticed the Hebrews to idolatry, so that the plague was sent among them of which no less than 24,000 Israelites died, Num. xxv., 9. God is just and His judgments are true and righteous, and if, therefore, He inflicts a punishment which may appear severe in the eyes of man, we may rest assured that it is founded on the strictest justice.

“Yea, surely God will not do wickedly,

“And the Almighty will not pervert judgment.”—Job.  
xxxiv., 12.

When, therefore, in the days of Noah “God looked upon the earth and saw that it was corrupt,” the deluge was sent to destroy “all flesh.” The gross wickedness of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah brought down brimstone and fire from heaven upon those cities and the other cities of the vale of Siddim, which were entirely destroyed with all their inhabitants, except the small city Zoar and Lot’s family.

But why go on particularising, when we have so many instances recorded in Scripture of God chastis-



ing not only the idolatrous nations, but also His chosen people Israel for their wickedness. If Bishop Colenso believes in the existence of God at all, he must believe that He is the ruler of the whole universe, and that the destinies of nations are entirely in His hand.

“Behold,” says Job, “he taketh away, who can hinder him?”

“Who will say unto him, What doest thou?”—Job. ix., 12.

And so Daniel likewise says, “He removeth kings, and setteth up kings.”—Ch. ii. 21.

If a country is afflicted with war, pestilence, or famine, does Dr. Colenso not recognise in such an affliction the chastening hand of God? I have no doubt he does. Is it then not impious to use such language as he has employed here?

“But how thankful we must be, that we are no longer obliged to believe as a matter of fact, of vital consequence to our eternal hope, the story related in Num. xxxi.”—p. 209.

Or in other words, “that we are no longer obliged to believe” that the Midianites were most justly punished for having designedly enticed the Israelites to idolatry, and to commit all kinds of abominations. Dr. Colenso would do well to read the last five chapters of Job, he will there find questions on topics so profound, so mysterious, which cannot fail to shew him clearly the shallowness of human knowledge, and convince him of his utter incapacity of understanding the ways and designs of the omnipotent Jehovah; and probably he will exclaim in deep humility, as did Job of old:

“Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee ?

“My hand I lay upon my mouth.

“Once have I spoken, but I will no more reply,

“Yea, twice, but I will do it no more.”—Ch. xl., 4, 5.

Dr. Colenso takes objection at the Israelites not losing “a single man,” but when we take into consideration that God fought for his people, and that they were under His protection, there is certainly nothing strange in this. Jericho was a strong city, and yet its walls fell at the mere blast of trumpets, and the shouting of the people. Gideon, when he was commanded to go against the Midianites and Amalekites and other allied invaders, and who are said to have been as numerous as grasshoppers, set out with 32,000 men ; but God in order to shew that victory did not depend upon the number of men, commanded him to reduce the army by a certain procedure which God Himself pointed out, which reduced the number to only 300 men. And yet with these few men Gideon vanquished the huge host which covered the great plain of Esdraelon, and probably without losing one of his men. (See for a full account Judges vii.)

The next and last objection which Dr. Colenso makes is, that there was not sufficient time for certain events “which are recorded in the book of Numbers” to have transpired between the “*first day of the fifth month*,” on which Aaron died, and the “*first day of the eleventh month*,” when Moses addressed the people on the plains of Moab.—Deut. i., 3. According to Dr. Colenso’s line of argument, it certainly would not be very easy to perceive how



all the events could have taken place during that time. He assumes that certain events occupied six months, and then coolly asks, "now what room is there for the other events which are recorded in the book of Numbers?"—p. 211. The sacred narrative, however, does not say a word as to the length of time each event occupied, and therefore the difficulty which the Bishop here points out is altogether of his own creating. But let us examine his arguments more closely. Dr. Colenso observes,

"We are told that Aaron died on 'the first day of the fifth month' of the fortieth year of the wanderings, Num. xxxiii., 38, and they mourned for him *a month*, Num. xx., 29." Then he goes on to say, "After this, 'King Arad, the Canaanite, fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners;' whereupon the Israelites attacked the Canaanites, and utterly destroyed them and their cities,' Num. xxi., 1-3, for which two transactions we may allow another month."

Dr. Colenso says "after this," meaning after the *month of mourning*; but the words "after this" are neither in the original, nor in the English version. It is more likely that King Arad took the opportunity of attacking them as soon as the mourning commenced, when they were not prepared for an attack. The Bishop is exceedingly liberal, he says, "for which two transactions we may allow another *month*." But why a "*month*," when it probably took no more than *eight* or *ten* days? King Arad attacked the Israelites, and took some prisoners—probably he took them by surprise—which may have been done in one day's engagement. One or two other decisive engagements, in which the Canaanites were utterly routed, may have put their cities in the

power of the Israelites. For it is distinctly stated in verse 3, "And the Lord hearkened unto the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities." That is, they destroyed the Canaanites who attacked them, together with perhaps a few unimportant towns, for they were only eventually subdued by Joshua, along with the other southern Canaanites. See Joshua xii., 7-14; compare also Joshua x., 41. In fact, the conquest which they here made evidently was of no great importance, or else they would have made their way at once into Canaan, instead of taking the circuitous route by the land of Edom. If we then suppose that Arad attacked the Israelites immediately after the death of Aaron, and allow ten days for the conquest, Dr. Colenso's *two months* are reduced to a fortnight. But the Bishop continues,

"Then they 'jourled from Mount Hor, by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom,' Num. xxi., 4, and the people murmured, and were plagued with fiery serpents, and Moses set up the serpent of brass, Num. xxi., 5-9, for all which we must allow at least a *fortnight*."

"They now marched, and made nine encampments, Num. xxi., 10-20, for which we cannot allow less than a *month*."

All this could easily have been performed in half the time; five days would be more than enough for the serpents being sent among the people, and the setting up of the serpent of brass. It is very probable that when the Israelites saw that they were to take a round-about way, they began to murmur, in consequence of which \*fiery serpents were sent

---

\* Fiery serpents, *i. e.*, deadly, poisonous; they are called *fiery serpents* from the burning inflammation which soon follows the bite.



among them, which are plentiful in that region. It is reasonable to suppose that as soon as the people saw that many were bitten and died, they would at once cry for help, and not wait ten or twelve days; all this might have transpired in *two* or *three* days, and allowing *two* days more for making the brazen serpent, we would have in all *four* or *five* days, instead of a *fortnight*. Then, as regards the *nine* encampments, for which Dr. Colenso cannot allow less than a *month*, all I can say is, that it is merely a conjecture of his own. Some of the places of encampment mentioned in Num. xxi., and xxii., are now not known, but if the reader will take up the map he will at once perceive, from the places still recognised, that the Israelites could have performed the journey in half the time.

“Then they sent messengers to Sihon,” says Dr. Colenso, “who ‘gathered all his people together, and fought against Israel,’ and ‘Israel smote him with the edge of the sword,’ and ‘possessed his land from Arnon unto Jabbock,’ and ‘took all those cities,’ ” &c., (Num. xxi., 21-25,) “for which we may allow another *month*.”

The language clearly indicates that one or two decisive battles put Israel in possession of the whole country. Sihon gathered all his people together, and Israel smote them with the edge of the sword; after the whole army was destroyed, the towns would at once surrender, it would have been useless for them to resist. All this probably took no more than *eight* or *ten* days.

“After this,” observes Dr. Colenso, “Moses sent to spy out Iaaazar, and they took the villages thereof, and drove out the Amorites that were there.”—Num. xxi., 32. “Say in another *fortnight*.”

“They drove out,” that is the spies drove out, which shews that the Amorites could not have been very numerous there; probably they had heard of the deeds which the Israelites performed, and made no great resistance but soon fled. A few days would have sufficed to perform all this, but I have no objection to allow the *fortnight*.

“Then they turned by the way of Bashan, and Og, the king of Bashan, went out against them, and they smote him and his sons, and all his people, *until there was none left him alive*, and they possessed his land.—Num. xxi., 33-35. For all this work of capturing three-score cities, fenced with high walls, gates, and bars, besides unwalled towns, a great many, Deut. iii., 4, 5, we must allow at the very least a month.”

Dr. Colenso it will be perceived has quoted verses 33 and 35, omitting verse 34, where it is said, “And the Lord said unto Moses, Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, and his land.” Now, with such a declaration before us, it is not unreasonable to assume that one decisive battle in which the whole of Og’s army may have been destroyed, would put the Israelites in possession of the whole country of Bashan with all its cities. When the whole of Og’s army was annihilated, the cities would of course make no further resistance. Dr. Colenso makes use of the word “capturing,” as if the Israelites had to besiege the fortified cities, but in Deut. iii., 4, it is only said they “took all his cities,” that is, they took possession of them: there is not a word about their having to *capture* them. These cities were probably taken possession of by divisions of the Hebrew army who were sent for that



purpose, so that the conquest of the whole country may have been easily accomplished in a very short time, say from *ten* days to a *fortnight*.

From what has been said it will be seen that those events need not have occupied more than *two months and a half*, and not “six months,” as Dr. Colenso will have it, and there was, therefore, ample time for all the other events recorded in the book of Numbers to have transpired within the “six months.” I have already stated, that the Mosaic narrative is altogether silent as to the length of time any of the events under consideration occupied, and, therefore, whatever is said upon the subject must necessarily be mere conjecture. Why, then, bring forward this subject at all as a proof of the “unhistorical character of the Pentateuch,” when all he can say is, “*we must allow, we may allow.*” God had promised to Abraham that his seed should possess the land of Canaan, (Gen. xii., 7,) and the time had now arrived when that promise was to be fulfilled, and therefore no obstacles however great could possibly have prevented the accomplishment of that promise. Dr. Colenso may say that it is impossible for those events to have been consummated in so short a time, but any one that views the subject in a proper light, will say *with God nothing is impossible*; or in the words of Solomon:

“*There are many devices in a man’s heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.*”—Prov. xix., 21.

---

# CONTENTS.

---

ARTICLES.	PAGE.
Preface.....	3 to 21
Cursory remarks on Bishop Colenso's book.....	4 — 9
Remarks upon the general merits of the authorized version	9 — 19
I. General remarks; ancient and modern writers.....	21 — 28
II. General remarks; reply to the manner in which Dr. Colenso explains away our Saviour's testimony; the five books of Moses bear strong marks as to their being written by one person .....	29 — 38
III. The family of Judah.....	39 — 47
IV. The extent of the camp compared with the priest's duties and daily necessities of the people.....	48 — 58
V. Supply of wood and water in the wilderness.....	59 — 68
VI. The sheep and cattle of the Israelites in the wilderness....	69 — 81
VII. Temperature of Palestine.....	82 — 84
Keeping of the passover in the wilderness.....	85 — 89
The number of lambs required for the passover.....	89 — 92
VIII. Institution of the passover; ancient Goshen; borrowing jewels of silver and jewels of gold.....	93 — 106
IX. Sojourning of the Israelites in Egypt; the number of generations.....	107—111
X. Increase of the Israelites during their stay in Egypt.....	112—124
XI. The Israelites armed.....	125—130
XII. The march out of Egypt.....	131—139
XIII. The Israelites dwelling in tents.....	140—148
XIV. The size of the court of the tabernacle compared with the number of the congregation.....	149—153
XV. The number of first-born compared with the number of male adults.....	154—160
XVI. The number of priests at the Exodus compared with their duties, and with the provisions made for them.....	160—170
XVII. The priests, and their duties at the celebration of the passover .....	170—177
XVIII. The number of the people and the poll-tax.....	177—181
XIX. The Danites and Levites at the time of the Exodus.....	181—193
XX. The number of Israelites compared with the extent of Canaan.....	193—198
XXI. Joshua addressing all Israel.....	198—203
XXII. The war of Midian. Reply to objection as to extravagant numbers in Scripture, and the slaughter of the Midianites compared with the slaughter of Cawnpore.....	203—214



## CORRECTIONS.

---

- Page 17—for Josh. xxi., 42, read Josh. xxi., 44.  
“ 28—for Judg. iii., 4, read Judg. iii., 14.  
“ 45—for ch. xlvi., 27, read Gen. xlvi. 27.  
“ 71—for Exod. xv., 22, read Exod. xv., 25.  
“ 88—for page 19, read page 119.  
“ 91—for Exod. xii., 2, read Exod. xii., 3.  
“ 97—for verse 5, read verse 3.  
“ 100—for verse 20, read verse 21.  
“ 105—for Psalms xxxvii., 12, read Psalm xxxvii., 21.  
“ 119—for Exod. xxvi., 60, read Num. xxvi., 60.  
“ 126—for Josh. iv., 2, read Josh. iv., 12.  
“ 149—for page 67, read page 76.  
“ 149—for Num. ii., 22, read Num. ii., 32.  
“ 149—for 34 feet, read 54 feet.











